



Dear Friends,

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you in the Missouri State Senate. It's hard to believe I have completed three legislative sessions as your state senator. When you elected me in 2006, I promised to stand up and fight for all Missourians and I'm proud to report that although there is still much work to do, the 2009 legislative session ended with significant victories for the people of Kansas City and Grandview.

This year the Missouri Legislature introduced 1,773 bills and 162 of those were delivered to the governor's desk for his signature. Included among this year's bills were significant job creation tools for the state of Missouri, key legislation for promotion of safe, affordable neighborhoods and foster care education reform.

Many of you have taken the time to contact me and I always appreciate your input and questions about the legislative process. To date, my office has responded to more than 10,000 constituent concerns and requests! Please continue to stay involved and in touch.

Sincerely,

On The Web:
www.senate.mo.gov/justus

Inside: A Look at 2009 Legislation
Foster Care Bill - Missouri Jobs: A Top Priority
FY 2009 Budget - Housing Victory - and more

THE JUSTUS JOURNAL – Senator Jolie L. Justus



For three years I have battled to pass the Foster Care Education Bill of Rights. The third time was definitely the charm. I not only passed the bill once, I actually passed it twice as an amendment to Senate Bill 291 and House Bill 154.

Missouri does a good job of finding foster children a safe place to sleep at night, but for years we have done a poor job of educating these same children. Kids in foster care struggle academically with lower graduation rates, reading ability and overall academic performance. These children are at greater risk of poor life outcomes than children in the general population. The quality of a foster child's primary and secondary education is a major factor in determining whether the child succeeds in life.

The Foster Care Education Bill of Rights addresses several shortfalls in how foster kids are educated. First and foremost it requires school records to be sent in a timely fashion to the student's new school. In my law practice I have represented countless foster children who have been forced to sit out of school for weeks at a time because schools are slow to request or send transcripts. Passage of this bill will make sure that foster kids are enrolled in their new school with little or no waiting period.

Better yet, some children will have the option to stay at their original schools. Moving from home to home is hard for kids. Sometimes the only constant for these children is their teacher or school friends. This bill will allow many foster children to stop changing schools, even when they are moved out of their original school district.

The bill will also give students who live in residential care facilities the opportunity for a full day of education. An increasing number of these children have been limited to one hour of education per day by local school districts. This bill will guarantee that the children's educational needs will be priority and no child will receive less than six hours of education a day unless absolutely necessary.

As wards of the state, these children and youth are in OUR custody. This bill is the first step toward making sure we give all our kids the education they so richly deserve.



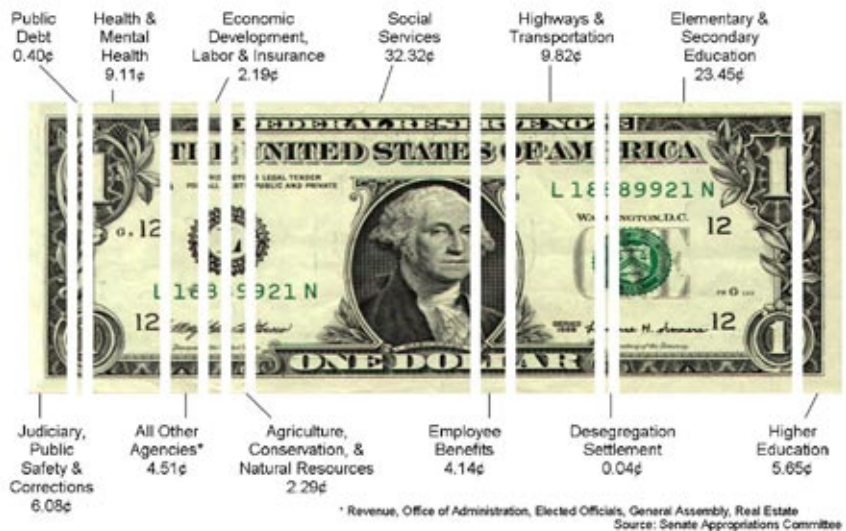
Sen. Justus debates a bill on the Senate floor.

Your Tax Dollars at Work:

The biggest story in Jefferson City this year was the budget. Although there are no “earmarks” in the state legislature, the Kansas City area was appropriated at least \$608 million in this year’s budget.

From Community Colleges and the Bartle Hall Convention Center to Western Missouri Mental Health and capital improvements for UMKC, Kansas City fared well during a year of tough budget cuts. At right is the overall breakdown of your Missouri tax dollar:

DISTRIBUTION OF EACH TAX DOLLAR FY 2010 AFTER VETO MISSOURI OPERATING BUDGET All Funds: \$23.087 Billion



Special Visitors:



Sen. Justus welcomes visitors from all over Missouri, as well as the world.

Here, she takes a moment to visit with some Boy Scouts from Pack 150, St. Elizabeth School, in the few minutes before a legislative session begins. The boys served as pages for the day, receiving and delivering documents between the senators and the presiding member of the Senate seated at the dais.

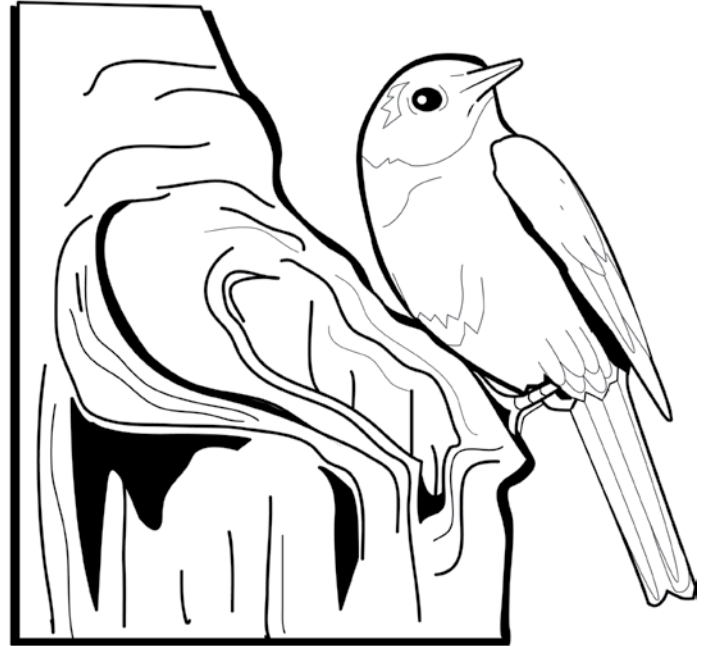
In the photo, Sen. Justus sits with Andrew Craig, Sam King, Ian McDonald and Robby Mansur.

The COLOR ZONE

The Bluebird became Missouri's official state bird in 1927. The bird is known as a symbol of happiness, Springtime and hope. Along with its prominent blue feathers, the bird also displays an array of orange, gold and white. Using the photo as a guide, color the bluebird at the far right of the page to make a colorful picture!



MISSOURI STATE BIRD



BLUEBIRD

Match-a-Word

Match each word below with its description.

- A. CHAMBER (example)
- B. DEBATE
- C. SHOW-ME STATE
- D. QUORUM
- E. DISTRICT
- F. JOURNAL
- G. FIDDLE
- H. DAIS
- I. BILL
- State Musical Instrument
- Number of senators required to conduct debate
- The daily record of the Senate's activities
- The large desk in the senate chamber
- A piece of proposed legislation
- Missouri State Nickname
- The area that a senator represents
- Place where legislators debate issues
- Discussion of legislation

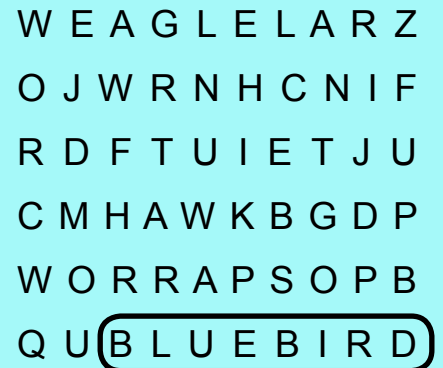
Find-a-Word

Along with the Bluebird, Missouri has many different kinds of birds that live all around us in parks, forests and even in our towns and cities.

Using the list below, circle as many words as you can find in the blue box. They may be sideways, up and down, or even backwards, so look carefully!

- BLUEBIRD*
- CROW
- EAGLE
- FINCH
- HAWK
- ROBIN
- SPARROW

* Example



2-1-1 Comes to Kansas City

In tough times, more and more of our neighbors are looking for help or looking to give a helping hand. Kansas City now has a one-stop-shop for people looking to give or receive services. Just call 2-1-1 or visit online at www.unitedwaygkc.org.



Get Help and Give Help

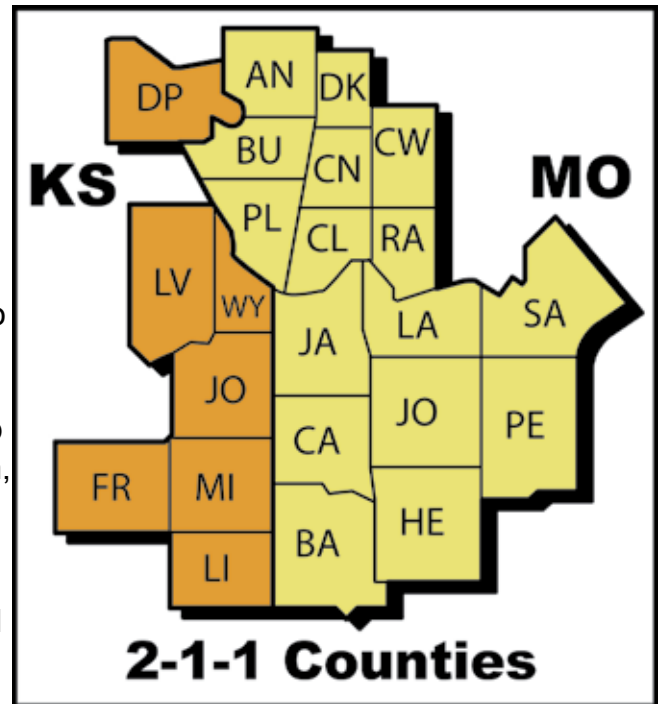
Need to find counseling? A nursing home? Job training? A food pantry? Want to volunteer or donate goods? Don't waste valuable time trying to find the right resource. Now, by simply dialing 2-1-1 on your phone, you can make just one call to find or give help. United Way 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember central phone number connecting people with available community resources and volunteer opportunities. You'll reach a trained, caring professional 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. All for free, all confidential.

United Way 2-1-1 spans a 23-county area, including 7 counties in Kansas and 16 in Missouri, and has access to literally thousands of resources. And that comprehensive database is constantly being updated so you'll have accurate information. In addition, United Way 2-1-1 will help keep people from dialing 9-1-1 for this type of information, thus keeping the 9-1-1 lines free for emergencies.

United Way 2-1-1 has a full time health care advocate who provides response to callers with health and medical issues, particularly those requiring advocacy. The health care advocate can help with prescription assistance, medical supplies and equipment, medical transportation, referrals to community clinics, in-home health aid, support groups, immunizations and more.

You can either call 2-1-1 or go to the website www.unitedwaygkc.org and click the 2-1-1 link on the left.

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Contact Sen. Justus:

Please contact Sen. Justus' office if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Missouri Legislature.
Sen. Jolie L. Justus
Room 328, State Capitol
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Phone: 573-751-2788
Email: jolie.justus@senate.mo.gov

Housing Victories

I was proud to co-sponsor and pass a bill this year with Representative Shalonn “Kiki” Curls (D-Kansas City). House Bill 836 provides protections to renters facing eviction due to foreclosure. The massive increase in home foreclosures means banks own a lot of homes, and banks often force tenants to leave immediately upon foreclosure sale. That’s not fair to a renter who has paid the rent on time.

The measure requires that tenants receive notice of foreclosure and provides additional time before being sued for eviction. In cases where a tenant is not in violation of a lease agreement, and lawfully occupies a foreclosed property, eviction action cannot begin until 10 business days after the tenant receives notice.

This bill provides some relief to families who find themselves in the impossible situation of being evicted through no fault of their own.



Assistance for Homebuyers of Foreclosed Properties

As of May 2009, the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) began administering the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), a down payment assistance program. The NSP provides funds for qualified homebuyers purchasing foreclosed properties to be used as the buyer’s principal residence.

Through the MHDC program, qualified borrowers are eligible to receive up to 20 percent of the purchase price of the home, with a maximum limit of \$14,999. First-time homebuyers using NSP funds are also eligible to receive the \$8,000 federal tax credit for first-time homebuyers, if the home is purchased before December 1, 2009. First-time homebuyers may claim the tax credit on their federal income tax return.

All MHDC loans are made through a statewide network of certified lenders. Interested homebuyers should contact a certified lender to apply.

More information about the program, as well as a list of certified lenders, can be found on the MHDC website at www.mhdc.com.



Sen. Justus, center, discusses legislation with Sens. Jack Goodman, left, and Joan Bray, right.

Senator Justus: 2009 Legislation

Every legislative session has many bills that get placed in the queue for consideration by the General Assembly. Only a small number ever make it to the governor's desk.

A single piece of legislation must go through many steps between the Senate, the House and various committees before it is perfected and passed.

Some bills never make it out of committee; others are withdrawn for technical or personal reasons. Many times, the session ends before a piece of legislation makes it through the process. Below is my own list of bills for the 2009 session:

Sponsored Legislation

Senate Bill 94 – Would have established child care assistance for working families

SB 95 – Would have allowed early voting

SB 96 – (Passed as part of SB 291 and HB 154) Creates the Foster Care Education Bill of Rights

SB 104 – Would have provided information and the opportunity to be immunized for the human papilloma virus

SB 105 – Would have created the Missouri Earned Income Tax Credit

SB 106 – Would have barred disseminating false election information

SB 108 – Would have created the Equal Rights statutory statement

SB 109 – Would have prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation

SB 163 – Would have created an income tax deduction for purchases of hybrid vehicles

SB 164 – Would have allowed Grandview to vote on a sales tax for public safety improvements

SB 165 – Would have allowed Grandview to vote on a tourism tax

SB 166 – (Passed as part of HB 239) Modifies the law regarding the Missouri Uniform Trust Code

SB 203 – Pertained to the duty of pharmacies to fill prescriptions

SB 253 – (Passed as part of SB 291) Establishes elected, rather than appointed, KCMO school board vacancies

SB 268 – Would have increased funding to the Missouri Housing Trust Fund for mortgage assistance and new home construction for low-income individuals and families

SB 292 – (Passed as part of HB 191) Creates the Angel Investor and Quality Jobs Act

SB 330 – (Passed as part of HB 116) Creates the crime of assault of a mass transit system employee

SB 331 – Would have enacted the Dream Act for college students

SB 396 – (Passed as part of HB 132) Modifies various laws relating to liquor control

SB 399 – Would have waived tax penalties for abandoned properties in Jackson County when rehabilitated

SB 424 – (Passed as part of HB 481) Allows Kansas City to enact ordinances regarding vacant nuisance buildings

SB 425 – Would have required health insurance policies to cover dental care for pregnant women

SB 467 – Would have required nursing home facilities to carry liability insurance

SB 468 – Would have required police to enter service of ex parte orders within twenty-four hours

SB 469 – (Passed as part of HB 836) Requires notice to tenants in cases of foreclosure and provides additional time before eviction actions may begin

SCR 3 - Would have urged Congress to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution

SCR 25 - Would have urged Congress to replace the "don't ask don't tell" policy with a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation

SR 579 – Would have created a procedure for adoption of courtesy resolutions with a non-discriminatory method

House Bill 836 – (Managed in Senate)(Passed) Requires notice to tenants in cases of foreclosure before the new owner may seek possession of the property

Co-sponsored Legislation

SB 17 – Would have eliminated the death penalty

SB 18 – Would have established the Missouri Universal Health Assurance Commission and modifies eligibility for MO HealthNet

SB 91 - Would have provided additional penalties for securities fraud crimes against the elderly or disabled

SB 92 – Would have modified Missouri securities law

SB 132 – Would have modified provisions relating to school anti-bullying policies

SB 239 – Would have modified the compensation rate for senior judges or senior commissioners

SB 265 – (Passed) Extends the collection of the Statewide Court Automation fee until 2013

SB 321 – Would have created a commission to study the death penalty in Missouri

SB 329 - Would have enacted the Prevention First Act

SB 375 - Would have provided health insurance coverage for Phase I clinical trials of cancer treatment

SB 463 – Would have required health carriers to provide coverage for the treatment and diagnosis of eating disorders

SB 486 - Would have granted employees of any public body the right to form and join labor organizations

SB 572 – Would have established the Science and Innovation Reinvestment Act

SCR 22 - Would have urged the United States Congress to enact the United States Health Insurance Act

SR 238 - Would have urged Congress and the President to maximize the investment in expanded and improved passenger train service as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan

Senator Jolie L. Justus
201 W Capitol Ave Rm 328
Jefferson City, MO 65101



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The most debated—and, arguably the most heated—issue of the 2009 legislative session was economic development. While we managed to pass a jobs bill on the final day of session, it took months of discussion, compromise and hard work to get a bill through both chambers and signed by the governor that would get Missouri back towards economic growth and create much-needed jobs.

The legislation, House Bill 191, had many of the same provisions as a bill I filed in Senate Bill 292, including expansion of the incentives available to businesses under the Quality Jobs program.

Quality Jobs provides tax incentives to businesses that create jobs paying above county average wages and provides at least half of their employees' health care benefits. Creating long-term jobs that offer competitive salaries and getting Missourians back to work were our primary considerations when we began developing this bill. It made sense to expand

on the proven success of the Quality Jobs program by increasing the cap on available tax credits by \$20 million and casting a wider net when determining which businesses are eligible to receive the tax credits.

Other portions of the new law include increasing the annual cap on the Business Use Incentives for Large-Scale Development (BUILD) Tax Credit program and the New Markets Tax Credit program from \$15 million to \$25 million; promoting small business growth by prohibiting increases in the user fees imposed by the state for obtaining small business licenses for a four-year period; and allowing pre-employment training to be included in the state's new or expanding industry training program. The new law also requires the Office of Administration to maintain the Missouri Accountability Portal, an easy-to-search database of financial transactions related to the purchase of goods and services and the distribution of funds for state programs.