

State Senator

# Kevin Engler

3rd District



Dear Friends,

The 2009 legislative session drew to a close on May 15<sup>th</sup>. With careful debate, discussion, and compromise, we made progress on many issues important to Missourians, particularly in helping to bolster our state's economy in these challenging times.

My role in the Missouri Senate changed this year as I took on the responsibility of Majority Floor Leader. In this position, I determine which bills are brought up for debate on the Senate floor. I will continue serving in this role during the upcoming legislative session.

The measures we successfully passed included a bill to help facilitate job creation in our state and legislation to allow retired veterans to keep more of their hard-earned income. We also began work on preventing abortions and increasing access to healthcare—work that I expect to continue next session.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve the 3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District. Please feel free to contact me about any of the information in this newsletter or about other issues that are important to you.

Thank you,

SENATOR ENGLER SERVES AS:

- CHAIRMAN OF THE RULES, JOINT RULES, RESOLUTIONS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE
- VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
- VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

## Responsible Spending

With the economic downturn facing the nation, this year was a complex budget year. The Legislature was able to successfully complete work on a balanced budget, while still relying on fiscally responsible policies to spend your tax dollars. Some highlights for the 3<sup>rd</sup> District are included on page 2.

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



1. Judiciary, Public Safety, and Corrections 6.08¢
2. Public Debt .40¢
3. Health and Mental Health 9.11¢
4. All Other Agencies\* 4.51¢
5. Economic Development, Labor, and Insurance 2.19¢
6. Agriculture, Conservation, and Natural Resources 2.29¢
7. Social Services 32.32¢
8. Employee Benefits 4.14¢
9. Transportation 9.82¢
10. Desegregation Settlement .04¢
11. Elementary and Secondary Education 23.45¢
12. Higher Education 5.65¢

\* Revenue, Office of Administration, Elected Officials, General Assembly, and Real Estate

Source: Missouri Senate Appropriations Committee

## Funding for the 3<sup>rd</sup> District

The following projects are funded in the fiscal year 2010 budget.

Mineral Area College.....	\$5.5 million
Mineral Area College (one-time funding).....	\$666,667
State Schools for the Severely Handicapped.....	\$1.5 million
K-12 Foundation Formula Funding.....	\$126.9 million
Mo. Sexual Offender Treatment Center.....	\$14.8 million
State Parks/Historic Sites.....	\$2.6 million
Eastern Reception & Diagnostic Center.....	\$19.4 million
Potosi Correctional Center.....	\$10.9 million
Farmington Correctional Center.....	\$18.8 million
Southeast Missouri Mental Health Center.....	\$21 million

## Expanding Quality Jobs

One of the Legislature's highest priorities this session was to help those in our state who are struggling in this tough economy. House Bill 191 is a balanced piece of legislation that supports job growth while protecting the interests of taxpayers in our state. The bill expands the Quality Jobs Act, a program that provides tax incentives to businesses that create jobs paying above a county's average wage and pay at least half of their employees' health insurance premiums. The cap for the program increases from \$60 to \$80 million per year. The bill also removes the per company cap for high impact and technology companies to promote growth in these industries.

Close to 95 percent of Missouri businesses have less than 50 employees, and HB 191 contains provisions to better the environment for our small businesses. For businesses with less than 25 employees, the act bans certain fee increases from the state, and prevents businesses from having to face additional red tape for licensing for the next four years. The legislation also phases out the Corporate Franchise Tax for companies with \$10 million or less in assets. These provisions will help small business owners save time and money that they can then reinvest in expanding their businesses.

The Senate also added important tax credit reforms to HB 191 to make sure the programs designed to attract and help businesses in our state are effective, and tax credits are spent in a fiscally prudent manner.



*Senator Engler during a press conference on the last day of session.*

## Affordable, Accessible Healthcare

This year, the Senate worked to pass Senate Bill 306, the Show-Me Healthcare Plan. This bill would have made healthcare more available, affordable and portable for all Missourians.

*By using this existing funding stream, Missouri would have been able to help 35,000 low-income, uninsured Missourians gain private healthcare coverage in the first year at no additional cost to Missouri taxpayers.*

The plan would have partnered the state and the private sector to offer health coverage to low-income Missourians by paying the health insurance premiums for individuals who earn up to 50 percent of the federal poverty level.

One of the best aspects of this legislation was that it would not have cost the state any general revenue. Coverage for the first 35,000 participants would be funded by a new federal draw-down on existing tax dollars that currently go to pay hospitals for the care of the uninsured.

While work on this legislation was not completed this year, it is my hope that we can continue making quality healthcare more available and affordable for all Missourians in the upcoming session.



*Senator Engler and Representative J.C. Kuessner with students visiting from Centerville Elementary on May 14<sup>th</sup>.*

# A Tax Break for Veterans

The brave men and women who fight for our freedom deserve our utmost respect and gratitude. Though we may never be able to truly repay the sacrifices both they and their families made to keep us safe, we can do our part to improve their quality of life by creating effective legislation that reflects Missouri's support for our veterans. With this in mind, the Legislature passed House Bill 82 this session, allowing veterans to keep more of their hard-earned income.

Two years ago, Sen. Engler supported the passage of House Bill 444, a bill that gradually eliminates state income taxes on any Social Security or public pension benefits for Missourians age 62 and older who do not exceed a certain income cap. This year, the Legislature expanded on that work by passing HB 82, which phases in a 100 percent income tax exemption for veterans on their military retirement benefits, regardless of the Social Security exemption. The exemption would increase by 15 percent annually beginning in 2010 until it is fully implemented at 100 percent in 2016. It also removes the age requirement, allowing all Missourians receiving public retirement benefits—including veterans—to take part in the income tax exemption.



## Protecting the Unborn

This year, the Senate worked hard on legislation to better preserve life in Missouri. House Bill 46 would have expanded the informed consent requirements for abortions in Missouri in order to allow those seeking an abortion to receive full information on their unborn child.

The bill would have required providing additional information to pregnant women at least 24 hours prior to an abortion including:

- The risks of an abortion and the physiological characteristics of an unborn child at two-week gestational increments.
- Information on the gestational age of the unborn child at the time the abortion is to be performed.
- An opportunity to view, at least 24 hours prior to an abortion, an ultrasound of the unborn child and hear the heartbeat of the unborn child.
- Prior to an abortion being performed past 22 weeks gestational age, information regarding the possibility of the abortion causing pain to the unborn child.

House Bill 46 would have also required a physician to discuss the medical assistance and counseling resources available, advise the woman of the father's liability for child support, and provide information about the Alternatives to Abortion Program.

Senator Engler worked hard to find a compromise and the measure passed in the Senate and moved to the House. Unfortunately, some groups who call themselves pro-life killed the bill in the final days of the legislative session. These groups felt that if they couldn't get everything they wanted, then they didn't want any of it, even though the bill still contained most of the important provisions that would directly save innocent lives. While the work was not completed this session, Sen. Engler expects these life-preserving measures to be discussed again next session.



*Senator Engler accepting the Legislator of the Year award from Becky and Roger Dickey on behalf of People First of Missouri at the Capitol on April 28<sup>th</sup>.*

## Help for a Local Industry

Senate Bill 235, which was passed by the General Assembly this session, contains a provision that would fairly tax sawmills as agricultural property.

Currently, the timber industry is regulated by the Department of Agriculture, but sawmills are taxed like shopping centers or strip malls. This tax rate is significantly more than the rate that agricultural property is taxed. The local sawmill industry has been struggling, especially in light of the national construction downturn. This provision would help ease the pain on this industry, which is extremely important to the Parkland.

**Senator Kevin Engler**  
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## Citizens Working to Serve and Improve Their State

If you are interested in serving on a state board or commission, you can find a complete list of boards and commissions online at:  
<http://governor.mo.gov/boards>



*Michelle Hoffmeister of Farmington, pictured with her family, was appointed to the Missouri Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities.*



*Rich Blakley of Viburnum was appointed to the Missouri Quality Homecare Council.*

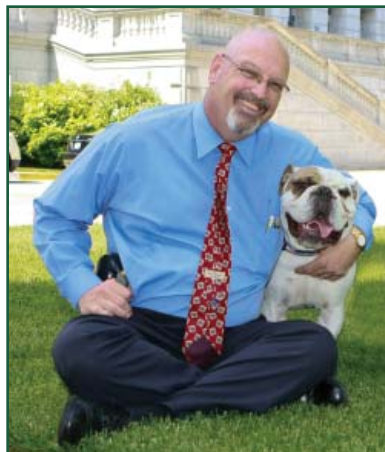
## Here to Help...



*Pictured above (from left) are Sen. Engler's staff, including: Legislative Intern Nathan Foust, Executive Assistant Karen Jacquin, Legislative Intern Alycia Yount, Sen. Engler, Legislative Director Mike Lodewegen, and Chief of Staff Jarad Falk. Sen. Engler's staff also includes Marilyn Pinson, who works in the Farmington office as district director.*

## A Perfect Pair

Senator Engler and his English bulldog, Winston, were proud to serve this year as parade marshals for a Pet Parade at Jefferson College to promote their Veterinary Technology program and Jeffco's Pet Adoption program. The pair also received recognition for closest look-a-likes during the festivities.



## Contact Senator Kevin Engler

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