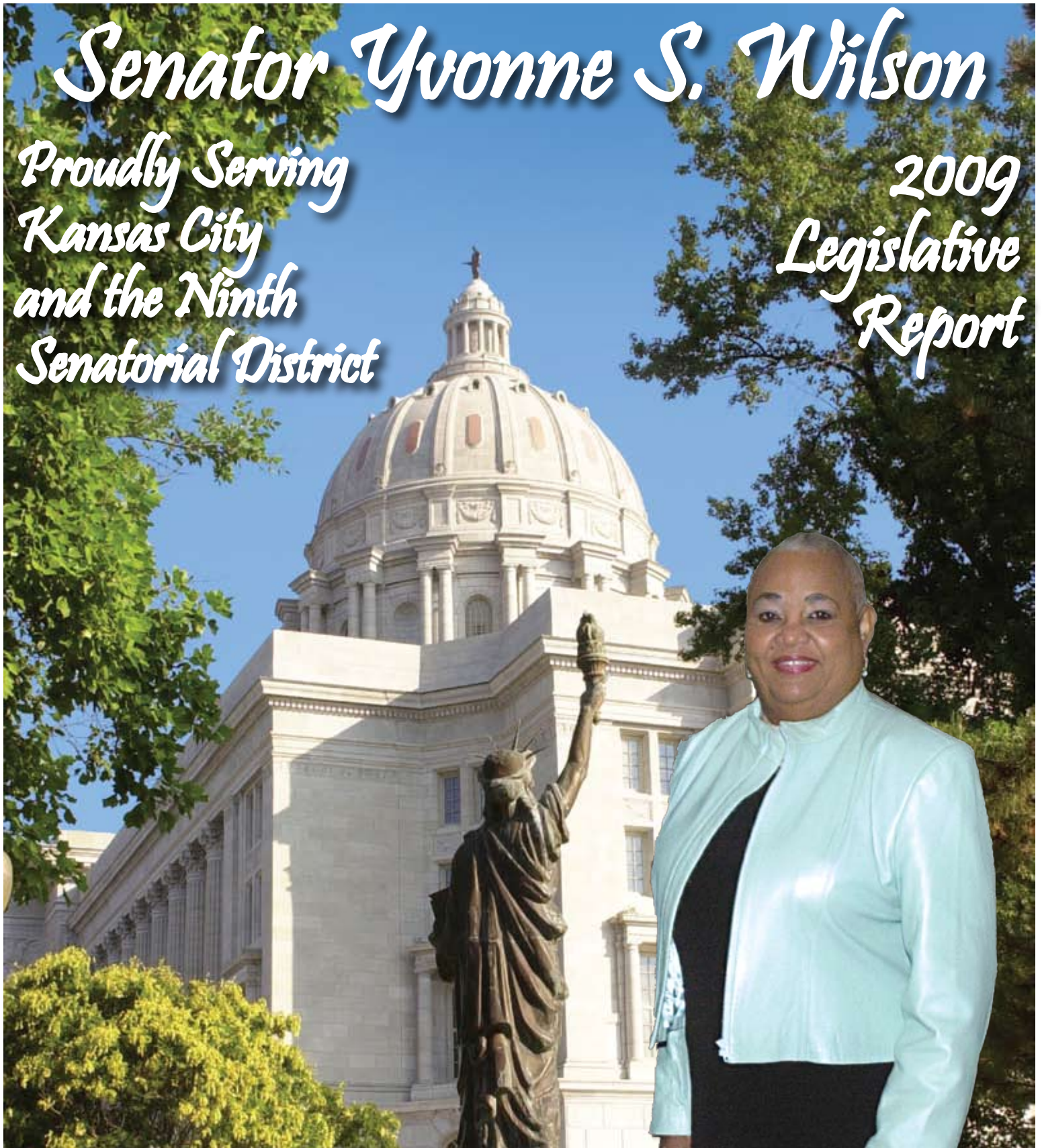


# Senator Yvonne S. Wilson

Proudly Serving  
Kansas City  
and the Ninth  
Senatorial District

2009  
Legislative  
Report



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# The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Helping Kansas City



On February 17, 2009, the president signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This resulted in the distribution of billions of dollars in two general categories of federal funding, intended to counteract the devastating impact of the nationwide economic recession of 2008 and 2009.

Stabilization funding was allocated to state governments to make up for declines in state revenues resulting from the recession. Stabilization funding was intended, as named, to stabilize state government budgets and prevent cuts in necessary services and the layoff of state employees. In the 2010 Missouri budget, \$783,341,748 in stabilization funding was utilized in various categories of state operations for the intended purpose of maintaining stability in state government. The stabilization process was implemented by the Legislature during budget deliberations led by the House Budget Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee. During these difficult deliberations, I was active and influential in my role as the sole member of the panel from Kansas City.

Next year, some \$1.1 billion is projected to be available in the second and possibly final year of the ARRA stabilization program. I'm taking my responsibility to provide Ninth District constituents with the benefits of the second phase very seriously. As of this writing, the Ninth Senatorial District

*"At the beginning of our budget process, we faced difficult decisions involving potential drastic cuts of essential services and layoffs of some 1,300 to 1,400 of the loyal and dedicated employees of the state of Missouri. The stabilization funds helped alleviate some of the suffering that would have resulted from drastically declining revenues. I am only sorry we couldn't do more in these desperate times."*

— **Senator Yvonne S. Wilson**

received stimulus funding in response to many areas of urgent need. In the area of support for law enforcement, the KCMO prosecutor's office received \$48,547 in Victims of Crime grants and \$141,825 in STOP Violence Against Women grants. The KCMO Police Department received \$8,366,750 for hiring police officers and other personnel. \$3,628,139 was received in homeless prevention and Rapid Re-housing Assistance, with \$2,950,000 calculated to local lead poisoning prevention grants and \$9,109,303 to home weatherization. A significant part of these funds will be utilized in improving the quality of life within the Green Impact Zone between Troost and Prospect avenues, from 39<sup>th</sup> to 51<sup>st</sup> Streets. This is the heart of the Ninth District.

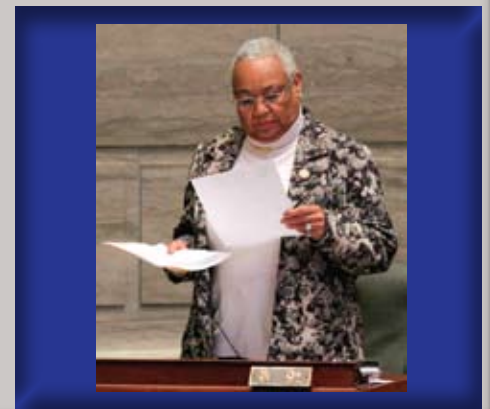
Funds are flowing to the district. Capital improvement projects within the Ninth District are being enhanced by stimulus funds. The multi-year re-channelization of the Blue River will receive \$15,200,000. This grant will help end the destructive flooding that has ravaged significant portions of the Ninth District for decades. A \$13 million grant will make a new Troost Avenue bridge over Brush Creek a reality and open the door for rapid transit along Troost, the

most heavily-utilized bus corridor in KCMO. A total of \$1.2 million will be utilized for traffic signal upgrades at 31<sup>st</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> streets, ensuring the efficient flow of traffic and safety for the pedestrians of the Ninth District. Under the funding enhancements to the Community Development Block Grant program, Palestine Commons at 34<sup>th</sup> and Montgall, preservation of the historic Lincoln Building in the 18<sup>th</sup> and Vine District and the Vine Street townhouses will receive much needed boosts in redevelopment funding totaling \$1,136,781. The Beacon Hill Development at 24<sup>th</sup> Street, east of Troost, will receive \$160,000 in environmental funding to assist in construction of modern single-family housing and townhomes.

I was also pleased with the commitment of stimulus funds by the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) to the improvement and enhancement of safety at the interchange of I-70 and I-435 by a commitment of \$32 million as part of the Missouri Urban Transportation Improvement Program.

*"It has been falsely rumored that Kansas City and the Ninth District did not receive federal stimulus funds. I am happy to say that an examination of the facts will disprove this rumor. I will do everything in my power to ensure that this important federal funding continues to come into the Ninth District. After all, it is our tax dollars at work to improve our community."*

— **Senator Yvonne S. Wilson**



# The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

*Part of the federal stimulus funding is appropriated by the Missouri Legislature, through House Bill 21:*

- Department of Economic Development Corporation for National and Community Service.
- \$63,000 for UMKC to provide training and mentoring opportunities for unemployed individuals.
- \$25,200 for Harvesters Food Bank in Kansas City for two additional staff positions.
- Housing and Urban Development Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program.
- \$3,600,000 for the Kansas City area overall.

*The rest of the federal stimulus money comes either through direct funding or through grants.*

- Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund \$3,000,000
- Byrne Justice Assistance Grant \$2,550,000
  - Victims of Crime Act Grant \$51,340
- STOP Violence Against Women \$150,766
  - Home Weatherization \$9,000,000
  - Blue River Channel \$15,200,000
- Troost Bridge at Brush Creek \$13,000,000
  - Traffic Control Center \$750,000
- 39<sup>th</sup> Street Traffic Signal Upgrades \$400,000
- 31<sup>st</sup> Street Traffic Signal Upgrades \$800,000
  - Indian Creek Trail \$365,000
  - Homeless Prevention \$3,628,139
  - Lead Paint Abatement \$2,950,000
  - Palestine Commons \$750,000
- Historic Lincoln Building Renovation \$250,000
  - Vine Street View Townhomes \$136,781
  - Beacon Hill Lots 2-5 \$160,000
- Energy Efficiency Block Grant \$4,823,200

## Economic Development: Rebuilding Missouri's Economy



Given the economic crisis facing our state and country, one of the most important bills we debated this year was the massive economic development bill that was approved in the final hours of the legislative session. It was critical that the Legislature approve some kind of jobs bill this year because of the downturn in the economy that has impacted families across Missouri as well as across the nation. We needed to act quickly.

House Bill 191, the omnibus economic development bill, will help create jobs by increasing the

cap on the Quality Jobs Program from \$60 million to \$80 million annually. These tax incentives are provided to companies wishing to locate or expand in Missouri. In return, these companies must promise to create or add jobs that pay well and offer health benefits.

This bill also attempts to reform our system of awarding tax credits and contains a provision that limits the amount of tax credits the Missouri Development Finance Board can issue in a calendar year without outside approval at \$10 million, while setting a cap of \$25 million, regardless of approval. House Bill 191 also caps historic preservation tax credits at \$140 million, though smaller projects

(those receiving less than \$275,000 in tax credits) are not included in the cap amount. Finally, tax credit recipients will be required to report any jobs created resulting from the use of tax credits.

Another provision in the bill prohibits increases in user fees for small business licenses for four years, which should help ease some of the burden on our small businesses — the driving engine of our economy.

Finally, the measure also makes it easier for the public to find out who is receiving tax credits from the state and what those tax credits are supposed to accomplish by visiting the Missouri Accountability Portal ([mapyourtaxes.mo.gov](http://mapyourtaxes.mo.gov)).

# Senate Bill 291: Keeping Missouri at the Forefront of Education



As a former teacher, education consultant and principal in the Kansas City School District for 35 years, I spend a lot of time as your state senator working to improve our public education system. Missouri lawmakers sent a comprehensive education bill to the governor during the 2009 legislative session. Senate Bill 291 ensures that all revenue collected from the repeal of casino loss limits (Proposition A) will be deposited into the Classroom Trust Fund to be distributed to schools. Missouri voters who approved Proposition A last November intended the extra money to go to our public schools, but the ballot language left some loopholes that needed to be closed to make sure the measure did what voters were told it would do.

Senate Bill 291 also creates the Missouri Senior Cadets Program, which will provide opportunities

for 12<sup>th</sup>-graders in public school to mentor kindergarten through eighth grade students. Participating students must be Missouri residents attending a Missouri high school, maintaining a 3.0 GPA and planning to attend college. Twelfth-graders who donate 10 hours per week during the academic year will receive one elective credit that may be used to fulfill graduation requirements. If a student attends a public college or university located in Missouri after participating in the program, the state

*"Senate Bill 291 includes some necessary features that will help bring our schools to the highest standards yet."*

— Senator Yvonne S. Wilson

will provide a reimbursement, subject to appropriation, in the amount of three credit hours per semester for up to four years. I am hopeful that many of the students who participate in this mentoring program will find it rewarding enough to pursue careers in the education field.

Senate Bill 291 also creates the School Flex Program to allow eligible

students to pursue a timely graduation from high school. The program is available for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders who have been identified by their principal and parent or guardian. Students must attend school a minimum of two instructional hours per school day within their school district of residence; pursue a timely graduation; provide evidence of college or technical career education enrollment and attendance, or proof of employment and labor that is aligned with the student's career academic plan; refrain from being expelled or suspended; pursue course and credit requirements for a diploma; and maintain a 95 percent attendance rate.

This act also changes requirements for the required attendance age for school districts, except for the St. Louis City Public School District. Current law defines the compulsory attendance age as 16. This act changes that to 17 years of age or successful completion of 16 credit hours that go toward the person's high school graduation.

Senate Bill 291 also creates the P-20 Council to help prepare students to enter the workforce, establishes methods for helping school districts apply for grants to prevent drop-outs, requires elementary students to have a certain amount of physical activity each day and allows school boards to set a four-day school week instead of a five-day week.

- Senate Bill 60 requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop teaching standards for Missouri public schools.
- Senate Bill 76 creates the Volunteer and Parents Incentive Program for public elementary and secondary schools.
- Senate Bill 78 creates the Missouri Senior Cadet Program for mentoring of kindergarten through eighth grade students.
- Senate Bill 79 modifies provisions relating to education.

*All of these bills were included in this year's omnibus education bill, Senate Bill 291.*



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# Senator Yvonne S. Wilson: Working for the 9<sup>th</sup> District

## Gubernatorial Appointments for 2009

*Every year, I have the honor of bringing some of our finest men and women before my fellow senators as nominees to serve on the boards and commissions of Missouri state government. I thank each and every person who has served, is serving now or will serve in the future.*



*Mary Long of Kansas City was sponsored by Sen. Wilson to sit on the University of Central Missouri Board of Curators.*



*Senator Wilson sponsored Kelvin Simmons of Kansas City (right) to be director of the Office of Administration.*



*Troy Nash of Kansas City was sponsored by Sen. Wilson to sit on the Missouri Housing Development Commission.*

**If you would like to be considered for a gubernatorial appointment, complete an application form ([www.governor.mo.gov/boards/](http://www.governor.mo.gov/boards/)).**

### Senator Wilson's Committee Memberships:



*"It is a pleasure to serve in the Missouri Senate."*

— Senator Yvonne S. Wilson

- Appropriations
- Education
- General Laws
- Health, Mental Health, Seniors and Families
- Joint Committee on Corrections
- Joint Committee on Education
- Missouri Emancipation Day Commission
- Missouri Health Facilities Review Commission
- Second State Capitol Commission

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Senator Wilson's Staff:  
Ronald E. Finley, Esq., Legislative Assistant  
Darsel Richmond, Administrative Assistant



## Health Care: What Has Been Done and What Still Needs to Be Done



Since January, the governor has been working with our universities to encourage students to pursue careers in health care to meet a growing need for doctors, nurses, dentists and other health care professionals — a proposal called Caring for Missourians. The budget passed by lawmakers in May distributes more than \$33 million in federal stimulus dollars to our public universities and colleges for “any one-time purpose.” The governor’s office says our public universities have agreed to use that money to implement Caring for Missourians, and a number of university officials have publicly pledged to do just that. I think this program is critical for our urban centers, which suffer from a lack of access to affordable health care.

State health officials estimate that in 2007, 28 percent of Missourians lacked access to adequate health care. The economic collapse caused many people to lose their jobs and their employer-sponsored health coverage. Most small business owners simply cannot afford to provide health coverage for their employees because of the rising costs of health care.

The projected increase in the elderly population adds another dimension to our health care crisis. More of our older citizens are making ends meet on one income and are skipping trips to the doctor or not filling needed prescriptions. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) says the senior populations in Missouri is expected to rise to 15 percent by next year and climb to 18 percent by 2020, a level higher than the national average.

Right now, the president and Congress are trying to develop some type of health care plan that offers coverage to all Americans. This plan might address some of the issues we face in Missouri. Until then, however, we should do everything in our power to expand access to timely, affordable health care for our citizens. I think Caring for Missourians is a step in the right direction. I also think it’s best for Missouri to have a plan for the immediate future.

***“We should do everything in our power to expand access to timely, affordable health care for our citizens, and I think Caring for Missourians is a step in the right direction.”***

**— Sen. Yvonne S. Wilson**

The Senate, with the governor’s backing, attempted to provide access to affordable health care to some 35,000 Missourians. The program would not have cost the state any money. It was passed by senators but did not make it through the Missouri House. The Show-Me Health Coverage Plan would have offered health care coverage through the private insurance market to working individuals with incomes up to 50 percent of the federal poverty level or working parents earning up to 100 percent of the federal poverty level (\$18,310 for a family of three). Funding for the plan would have come from federal dollars and existing hospital taxes, not existing Missouri revenues.

Under the Show-Me Health Coverage Plan, participants would receive a health care account through which they would make payments. Employers, the state or any charitable organization could also make payments into the participant’s individual health care account, which would be used to pay deductibles for their

health care services. The legislation would have limited participation in the program to three years, with an option to extend it two more years if the individual is enrolled in a GED program or is taking college courses. Five years would be the maximum amount of coverage allowed under the proposed plan.

Eventually, health care coverage could be offered to approximately 200,000 Missourians. Eligibility for the plan would be phased in incrementally based on available funding. Making health care accessible and affordable for all Missourians is simply the right thing to do. I will do everything in my power during the next legislative session to move this issue forward.



# Your Statewide Elected Leaders



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- Conservation: P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-4115
- Corrections: P.O. Box 236, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-2389
- Economic Development: P.O. Box 1157, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.....(573) 751-4962
- Elementary and Secondary Education: P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-4212
- Health and Senior Services: P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-6400
- Higher Education: 3515 Amazonas Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65109.....(573) 751-2361
- Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration: P.O. Box 690, Jefferson City, MO 65102 (573) 751-4126
- Labor and Industrial Relations: P.O. Box 504, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-9691
- Mental Health: P.O. Box 687, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-4122
- Natural Resources: P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-3443
- Public Safety: P.O. Box 749, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-4905
- Revenue: 301 W. High St., Jefferson City, MO 65101.....(573) 751-4450
- Social Services: P.O. Box 1527, Jefferson City, MO 65102.....(573) 751-4815
- MoDOT: 105 W. Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65102.....1-888-275-6636

To keep up with the Missouri Senate, Sen. Wilson, all of the legislation lawmakers discuss throughout the session, committee hearing schedules and other information, log on to [www.senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov)



*Senator Yvonne S. Wilson*

*2009 Legislative Report*

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## *Major Legislation Passed in 2009*

- SB 36 - Modifies provisions relating to forcible sexual offenses against children.
- SB 140 - Modifies provisions relating to criminal nonsupport.
- SB 141 - Modifies the law on the establishment of paternity.
- SB 157 - Codifies into law the five regional autism projects.
- SB 376 - Modifies provisions relating to energy.
- SCR 2 - Recognizes October 3<sup>rd</sup> of each year as Science Day.
- HB 154 - Modifies provisions on placement of children.
- HB 236 - Requires school districts to adopt policies to allow students with a disability to participate in graduation ceremonies with their graduating class.
- HB 247 - Modifies provisions relating to review of advanced practice registered nurses by collaborating physicians and the definition of eligibility for the nursing student loan program.
- HB 265 - Modifies provisions relating to teacher and school retirement systems.
- HB 272 - Establishes the Alzheimer's State Plan Task Force.
- HB 397 - Modifies provisions of the Police Retirement System of Kansas City.
- HB 506 - Requires the governor to annually issue a proclamation declaring the first week of March as Math, Engineering, Technology and Science Week.
- HB 802 - Implements new median family income eligibility thresholds for persons living in owner-occupied units and rental units for purposes of receiving assistance under the Neighborhood Assistance Act.
- HB 836 - Requires certain notices to occupants of residential property in cases of foreclosure before the new owner may bring an action seeking possession of the property.
- HB 863 - Requires courts to accommodate child witnesses in certain judicial proceedings in several ways.
- HB 922 - Requires each school district to adopt a policy on allergy prevention and response.

*For a complete list of bills, log on to  
[www.senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov)*

## *Missouri's Ninth Senatorial District*

