



Senator Jim Lembke
1st Senate District

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

Capitol Building, Room 428
Jefferson City, MO 65101

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Senator Jim Lembke Holds Press Conference Highlighting Bill to Help St. Louis Public Schools

Joined by Concerned Parents and Lawmakers at a North St. Louis Grade School

JEFFERSON CITY — State Sen. Jim Lembke, R-St. Louis, was joined yesterday (3/2) by a group of concerned parents and legislators to answer questions about [Senate Bill 439](#), which would allow schools to buy school buildings for sale instead of closing them and leaving them vacant. Currently, 12 of 15 charter schools that are set to open are still looking for a facility to use while St. Louis Public Schools has seven buildings for sale and 22 that are empty.

“If the St. Louis Public Schools have so much money that they can afford to close schools and not sell them, then maybe we should be looking at their overall budget in the interests of the taxpayers who own the property,” Sen. Lembke said.

Senator Lembke was joined by Sen. Jane Cunningham, R-Chesterfield, Sen. Jeff Smith, D-St. Louis, and two members of the Missouri House of Representatives during the morning press conference. Senator Lembke is asking people to call their local lawmakers and ask them to support Senate Bill 439.

Senator Smith said, “As I accompanied police officers on a series of ride-alongs throughout North St. Louis last summer, I saw that abandoned buildings are too often havens for drug dealing, prostitution and other illicit activities. As residents of these neighborhoods band together to form block units and work to stabilize areas plagued by crime, the last thing they need are 40 more empty buildings to contend with. That’s why the SLPS should sell these buildings to the highest bidder, especially since educational entities are some of the only groups seeking to purchase the buildings.”

Senator Lembke added, “This is one of my top priorities and I call upon the city schools to end their discriminatory practices for the good of the children. St. Louis City School’s failures should not act as a blockade for a child to attain a quality education.”

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