



Senator Kevin Engler

Capitol Report

Majority Floor Leader

3rd District

*Senator Kevin Engler proudly represents the people of
Carter, Iron, Reynolds, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve,
Washington counties and part of Jefferson County*

[Website](#) | [Contact Me](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

Week of February 9, 2009

Bills Debated on the Senate Floor

At this point in the legislative session, a lot of the work we do on legislation is in Senate committees. This week, though, we did debate the first bills to come before the full Senate this session. I thought I would fill you in on some of the bills we dealt with this week.

[Senate Bill 128](#) would change some of our current laws for design-build highway project contracts to allow MoDOT to complete transportation projects more quickly and efficiently. This legislation is especially important in light of the federal economic stimulus proposal that may be offering funding to states for infrastructure projects. The legislation is a small step that could make a big difference for roads in our state.

We also discussed [SB 36](#). This bill will make a life sentence truly a life sentence for the depraved individuals who commit the crime of forcible rape or sodomy of a child under the age of 12. Currently, those convicted of this crime can be eligible for parole or probation after 30 years in prison. Senate Bill 36 will make sure that prosecutors can ask for a penalty that truly fits the crime and ensures that these criminals will never be able to hurt another child.

We also approved a bill that would prohibit the possession or use of an alcoholic beverage vaporizer, a device that allows one to essentially feel the effects of alcohol at a more rapid rate by converting hard liquor into a mist that can be inhaled. [Senate Bill 26](#) is a serious step towards combating the dangerous, and sometimes deadly, effects of alcohol poisoning.

There has also been quite a bit of talk over the past couple of weeks about Gov. Nixon's appointment for Economic Development Director, Linda Martinez. While we did ultimately approve her appointment this week, there were several legitimate concerns raised. I hope the governor takes this as a sign that we are going to look at each candidate critically to find the best fit for our state's departments. I wish Ms. Martinez the best in her new role, and I know the Senate will continue to evaluate each candidate just as closely as her case.

Speaking of appointments, I serve as the vice-chairman of the [Gubernatorial Appointments](#) Committee, and we have been continuing the review process for the department heads appointed by the governor. Last week, I mentioned that I was becoming concerned over the number of lawyers the governor was sending our way. This week, we held hearings and approved two more nominees, yet another was an attorney. This is a pattern that I do not think will benefit our state. Those who head our state departments should have direct experience with the issues they will be managing on a daily basis.

This week I was glad to see retired teachers from all over the district, constituents attending Truman State, Mineral Area Arts Council representatives and teachers with MSTTA.

If you are planning a trip to Jefferson City in the near future, do not hesitate to contact my office. You may reach me at 573-751-3455, send your e-mails to kevin.engler@senate.mo.gov or write to me at the Missouri Senate, State Capitol, Room 331, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

If you know anyone who would like to receive these updates electronically, please [send me](#) an email.

Contact Information

Capitol Office
State Capitol Building
Room 331
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Website:
<http://www.senate.mo.gov/engler>

Phone Number:
573.751.3455
Fax:
573.522.9318