



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*

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Week of April 20, 2009

Moving Through the Legislative Process

With only three weeks left in the year's regular legislative session, we are working on a wide variety of bills to better our state. Over the next several weeks, we will continue working through the process to get priority legislation passed and on to the governor's desk.

This week, we completed work on [House Bill 259](#), a bill I handled in the Senate. The legislation changes Missouri's prompt pay law for health insurance claims. The measure would give health insurance carriers 45 processing days, instead of the current 45 calendar days, to pay a claim. In the Senate, we added additional provisions to increase transparency and consumer protections when an insurance claim is filed. This bill was sent back to the House, and will go to conference committee if House members do not agree to the changes we made.

Each year, we usually pass an omnibus bill that addresses local governments. I added an amendment to this year's version, [House Bill 376](#), to save counties thousands of dollars. The provision changes the rules regarding the sale of real property for the collection of delinquent taxes. Under the measure, the county collector is required to send up to two notices prior to a tax sale to the owner of record of the property: the first notice by first class mail, and the second notice by certified mail if the assessed property valuation is at least \$1,000. The bill received initial approval from the Senate.

We also completed work on several Senate bills this week. These bills now move to the House. They include:

[Senate Bill 167](#): The legislation would require most health carriers that issue or renew

health benefit plans to provide coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with autism up to age 18. The legislation would also prohibit health carriers from refusing to issue or renew coverage based solely on the fact that an individual is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.

[Senate Bill 549](#): The bill would create an internet database of MO HealthNet (our state's Medicaid program) disbursements. While protecting the privacy of MO HealthNet recipients' information, the database would allow claims and payments to be tracked, making it easier to spot instances of fraud.

While we spend much of our time during the session on legislation, the one task we are constitutionally obligated to complete each year is to craft the state's budget. Last week, we worked on the Senate floor to discuss and pass each of the 13 budget bills. This week discussions began between House and Senate members to iron out the differences between the versions passed by the two chambers. The conference committee process will continue next week, and both chambers will pass the final version before the constitutional deadline, which falls on May 8th this year.

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.

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