



State Senator Kurt U. Schaefer - District 19

Weekly Capitol Review

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Legislative Highlights from the Missouri Senate – Week of Feb. 9, 2009

Dear friends:

Although the governor last week wisely restored some of the funds he originally intended to withhold from the University of Missouri's Extension Centers throughout the state, I am urging that these vital education links not be specifically targeted, and that instead, the university be allowed to make its own budgetary decisions. On a similar front, I am hopeful the governor will lift his suspension of the construction funding for the Ellis Fischel Cancer Center that the Legislature had previously authorized. I will keep you posted on both of these fronts.

While the full Senate has given first-round approval to several bills, the majority of legislation is still being considered by the various committees.

[Senate Bill 202](#), a bill I sponsored, was heard last week by the Small Business, Insurance and Industry Committee. The bill seeks to prevent an unfair bias towards insurance claims by motorcycle drivers based solely on the fact that a motorcycle was involved in an incident when the driver was operating the cycle in an otherwise legal manner.

A lengthy hearing was conducted last week by the Senate's Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy and Environment panel on [Senate Bill 228](#), sponsored by Sen. Delbert Scott. The Missouri Clean and Renewable Energy Construction Act would allow electric companies to finance the construction of certain power plants by adjusting the electric rates prior to the start-up of the new facility. We are going to continue to debate this very important piece of legislation this week.

A bill sponsored by Sen. Luann Ridgeway and coming up for final passage by the Senate seeks to prohibit the use of alcoholic beverage vaporizers, which allow delivery of alcoholic beverages into the lungs and directly into the bloodstream. [Senate Bill 26](#) points to these devices as potentially dangerous by increasing the risk of alcohol poisoning and possibly the number of drunk drivers based on the likely abuse of these units. A bill similar to this was introduced last

session but was stalled in the committee process and ran out of time before it reached the Senate floor.

In other news, as a member of the Senate Select Committee on Oversight of Federal Stimulus, I can tell you we are meeting on a weekly basis to study the best strategies for securing the maximum amount of federal dollars from the anticipated federal economic stimulus plan now working its way to the president's desk.

Finally, my recent appointment to the Joint Committee on Education allows me to review the progress of education in our state to ensure that our students receive the best possible education possible. Our young people are our future, and we must educate them to retain our position as a global leader.

These are just a few of the issues the state Senate is working on to better the lives of Missourians. For a more detailed report of all Missouri legislation, visit www.Senate.mo.gov.

I will continue to keep you updated on bills being introduced that may be of interest to you as well as upcoming events here at the Capitol. As always, feel free to contact my office if you have any questions or concerns about the Missouri Legislature.

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