



State Senator Kurt U. Schaefer - District 19

Weekly Capitol Review

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

Dear friends:

The Legislature's annual Spring Break is now upon us, giving me the opportunity to inform you of where we stand on some of the legislation making its way through the General Assembly.

[Senate Bill 202](#), a piece of legislation I sponsored, was passed by the Senate last week. This legislation prevents insurance claims adjusters from assigning fault to a driver involved in an accident simply because they were operating a motorcycle in an otherwise legal fashion.

A controversial amendment added to this bill by Sen. Luann Ridgeway paves the way to repeal the mandatory helmet law for motorcycle operators and riders over the age of twenty-one. The helmet law legislation has been added to bills for the last several years, but has been defeated until now. The whole package now goes to the House for similar consideration before becoming law.

[Senate Bill 313](#), a bipartisan bill co-sponsored by Sens. Gary Nodler and Joan Bray, became the first bill of the session sent to the governor's desk for his signature. The bill creates two specific funds to help Missouri track and utilize the funds from the Federal Economic Stimulus Package.

Incidentally, the Senate Select Committee on Oversight of Federal Stimulus Plan met last week for the final time to review the recommendations for use of the federal stimulus funds. The recommendations were due to be submitted Thursday, March 12, 2009.

In other legislation, an omnibus transportation bill won first-round approval from the Senate last week. [Senate Bill 58](#), sponsored by Sen. Bill Stouffer, covers many issues relating to transportation in our state. An amendment by Sen. Ryan McKenna was added to the measure which prohibits drivers from sending, reading or writing text messages while driving on Missouri highways.

Another amendment to this bill, offered by Sen. Jim Lembke, concerns the red-light cameras at many intersections. It stipulates that a driver caught in a violation by one of the cameras must be clearly identifiable in the photograph.

A final passing vote from the Senate was also received by Senate Bill 93, sponsored by Sen. Tim Green. The bill, also known as “David’s Law,” establishes a drunken driving risk reduction awareness program which provides for the placement of signage at or near the scene of accidents involving drunken driving. This will prohibit future private signs and memorials to victims by families and friends, but allows present memorials to remain in place.

These and many other pieces of legislation are being voted on, considered and discussed as the session passes the halfway mark. More information may be obtained by visiting www.senate.mo.gov. As always, if you have questions or concerns about any issue involving the Missouri legislature, please feel free to contact my office.

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