



## The Stouffer Report: *Bills Become Law*

August 28<sup>th</sup> is the date when most bills become law in Missouri. This year, 37 Senate bills were signed, 12 were vetoed; 92 House bills were signed, 11 were vetoed; and 11 budget bills contained line-item vetoes. Of all of the bills that were signed this year, there are four that will probably have the biggest impact on our state.

[House Bill 191](#) is the much talked-about jobs bill. We spent a great deal of time on this bill throughout the First Regular Session of the 95<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

The highlight of the jobs bill is the changes that will be made to certain tax credit programs. We have been looking at all of the tax credits that the state provides lately, and it is looking more and more like something needs to be done to keep tax credits from getting too big for their own good. There are some who say all tax credits should be done away with and others who say they should not be touched at all. Somewhere in between these two schools of thought is probably where we should be. This is a discussion that will continue into the next session and possibly beyond.

[Senate Bill 291](#) is the omnibus education bill. What first started as a small move to allow school districts to add virtual classes turned into an all-encompassing measure. There are many positive measures in this bill, many of which will benefit rural Missouri.

A key point in the bill changes the way the state divvies up casino revenues after Proposition A was passed by voters. It turns out there was a flaw in the ballot language, but our bill corrects that to ensure school districts get the money they were promised.

[House Bill 62](#) is this year's omnibus crime bill. This is

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another example of a measure that grew from something small to become a bill with something for nearly everybody in Missouri. It is important to note that the bill changes a lot of crime laws that date back to the early 1900s. Now, we will be able to enforce laws in a better fashion than we could before.



The part of this bill that has received the most attention is the provision that bans folks 21 and younger from sending or receiving text messages while they drive.

[House Bill 683](#), which I handled in the Senate, is a major transportation bill. The bulk of the items in this measure are directed at rural Missouri and feature provisions ranging from changes to commercial driver's license (CDL) requirements for farm vehicles to letting folks pay vehicle tax at the dealership, instead of having to go to the nearest license office.

You can see all of the bills that became law this year and details about these bills by logging onto [www.senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov).

I will always maintain that the success of an elected official should not be tied to how many bills he or she sponsored or was able to pass, but how well each office represents their district. Your elected officials are here to represent you, so I trust you will continue to keep in touch on these and other important issues.

*Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and a part of Clay.*

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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