

State Senator Robert Mayer The Mayer Memo

Senator Robert Mayer - Serving Butler, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Stoddard & Wayne Counties



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Bills Recently Signed into Law

Most legislation passed during the recent session of the General Assembly has now been reviewed by the governor and either signed or vetoed with some bills still under consideration.

Laws to give our state's economy a boost are among those that have been signed into law this summer. Last month, the governor signed [House Bill 191](#), a vital and bipartisan piece of legislation that will help business create new jobs, expand operations, and train workers. More specifically, the wide-ranging bill expands the Missouri Quality Jobs Program, which gives tax credits to job-creating businesses that provide better health care coverage and have a higher wage than their county average. The legislation also increases the cap on the Missouri BUILD (Business Use Incentives for Large-Scale Development) — a program that provides financial incentives for the location or expansion of large business projects that demonstrate a need to reduce necessary infrastructure and equipment expenses. The bill also expands pre-employment training through the state's job-training program — a move that will enhance workers' job skills and employment eligibility.

House Bill 191 also includes the "*Big Government Get Off My Back Act*," which will prevent any state agency from increasing user fees on companies with fewer than 26 employees within four years of the passed date of legislation. The measure is designed to provide relief to small business owners who have taken a hard hit from the recent financial crisis and struggled to remain in operation.

In addition, the jobs bill defines the amount of tax credits the Missouri Development Finance Board can award during the calendar year, increases the tax credit cap for qualified equity investments, and establishes a cap on the state's historic preservation tax credits. Some of the measures contained emergency clauses while the others will become law with most bills on Aug. 28.

Several of my own pieces of legislation that I sponsored, co-sponsored, or handled in the Senate have also received the governor's approval thus far, including:

- [Senate Bill 265](#) — a measure that will allow Missouri state courts to continue collecting the Statewide Court Automation Fee until 2013 to pay for computerized judicial recordkeeping. Court automation links all of Missouri's courts and state agencies with each other, makes case filing and processing more efficient, saves taxpayers dollars and enhances public safety.

- [House Bill 93](#) – includes my co-sponsored measure from another bill allowing tractors participating in parades and other special events to be driven during daylight hours on Missouri roadways for fundraising purposes with the approval of the Missouri State Highway Patrol.
- [House Bill 289](#) – removes the exception for expedited hearings and makes the five-day notice applicable to all special education due process hearings.
- [House Bill 485](#) - modifies the membership and quorum requirements for the Seismic Safety Commission.
- [House Bill 682](#) - includes a measure I sponsored in another bill to allow school districts hammered by inclement weather, including Malden, Kennett and Senath-Hornersville, to make up no more than 10 days.
- [House Bill 716](#) - expands newborn screening requirements to include screening for five life-threatening diseases, including Krabbe, Pompe, Gaucher, Niemann-Pick and Fabry disease.

Education measures I successfully advanced in the General Assembly — incorporated into [Senate Bill 291](#) — have yet to be signed as of this writing, but are expected to be signed soon. They include changing the state's school funding formula so that money derived from the passage of Proposition A last November by Missouri voters will go to students in Missouri classrooms as intended *and* removing the current 5 percent growth cap so schools can continue to receive this increased funding.

Next week I'll highlight additional legislation that has been enacted into law.

As always, if you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at 1-877-291-5584.

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