

Week of June 15, 2009



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[Legislation Awaits Governor's Signature](#)

Although lawmakers are no longer traveling to Jefferson City each week for the legislative session, the legislative process is far from over. Now that all passed bills have been sent to the governor, the next step is for him to sign these bills into law. He may also elect to use his veto power. The governor has until July 14 this year to either sign or veto each bill; if he doesn't sign any piece of legislation by the deadline, it automatically becomes law.

Every bill the governor vetoes is sent back to the sponsoring chamber with his objections. The governor's vetoes, if any, will be considered by the Legislature when we reconvene for veto session in mid-September. If we decide to try to override the veto, it will be put to a vote. To overturn a governor's veto, a two-thirds majority vote in both chambers is required.

Most of the passed bills that are signed by the governor take effect on August 28, though some contain "emergency clauses" that were approved separately from the legislation. Any bill or provision attached to an emergency clause takes effect immediately upon receiving the governor's signature, or at another specified date. This year, out of the more than 1,800 bills and joint resolutions introduced by lawmakers, the General Assembly passed 162 bills and two joint resolutions, which are both proposed constitutional amendments that must be approved by voters to become law. From a numbers standpoint, it may seem as though we didn't get much accomplished, but these numbers are typical of any given year in the General Assembly. The limited time frame in which to pass legislation forces us to focus on getting the most important and necessary bills through the process.

Also, these numbers can be deceptive because the language contained in some bills is amended, or added, to other bills. So, actually, a more accurate way to judge the success of a legislative session is to look at the quality and substance of the bills passed, rather than the quantity.

I was fortunate, especially as a freshman senator, to have five of the Senate bills I sponsored this year pass. These measures include [SB 44](#) (private jail regulations), [SB 242](#) (storm water fees and Cass County sewer sub-district bonds), [SB 542](#) (Missouri Linked Deposit Program expansion), [SB 243](#) (loan transactions) and [SB 485](#) (publishing of bank account numbers for political committees). Seven of the House bills I handled in the Senate also moved to the governor's desk and language from four bills I originally sponsored was included in other passed bills.

Of all the bills passed by the General Assembly this year, none had a more difficult road to travel than the jobs bill, [House Bill 191](#). Though debate was long and trying at times, the bill was one of the first to receive the governor's signature after it was signed earlier this month. Because the bill contained an emergency clause, it took effect immediately upon receiving the governor's signature.

Many of the provisions in HB 191 are similar to a bill I introduced this session, [SB 45](#). One of the major job-creating components of HB 191, which I also introduced in SB 45, was increasing incentives available to job-creating businesses under the Quality Jobs program. Quality Jobs provides tax incentives to businesses that create jobs paying above county average wages, and that pay for at least half their employees' health care benefits. Bringing sustainable jobs that offer competitive salaries to Missouri and getting Missourians back to work were our primary goals when we set out to create a bill that would help get the economy back on track. This is why it made sense to expand the already-successful Quality Jobs program by increasing the cap on the amount allowed for the program from \$60 to \$80 million and expanding which companies are eligible to receive the tax credits.

Other portions of the new law include instituting tax credit transparency, increasing the annual cap on the Business Use Incentives for Large-Scale Development (BUILD) Tax Credit program and the New Markets Tax Credit program from \$15 million to \$25 million, and prohibiting increases for a four-year period in user fees imposed by the state for obtaining small business licenses (The Big Government Get Off My Back Act).

As always, please feel free to contact me or my staff with any questions or concerns at any time. We look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions and trying to answer any questions you may have. You can reach us by phone at 866-277-0882 (toll-free) or 573-751-2272, or by fax at 573-526-7381.

Senator David Pearce serves Bates, Cass, Johnson and Vernon counties in the 31st State Senate District.

Contact Information

Capitol Office

State Capitol Building
Room 419
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Website:

<http://www.senate.mo.gov/pearce>

Phone Number:

866.277.0882 (toll-free)
573.751.2272

Fax:

573.526.7381