

Senator

16th District

# FRANK BARNITZ

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT



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# Supporting Our Number One Industry

Missouri has a strong history in agriculture, and Sen. Barnitz serves as an advocate for the industry to ensure that his fellow legislators recognize the value of agriculture in the state.



## A Voice for Agriculture

Senator Barnitz has served as an active member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources since 2005. In this role, he has the opportunity to be more involved in legislation that will benefit Missouri's number one industry.

## Personal Property Rights

Senator Barnitz sponsored a bill to change provisions for those wanting to prohibit trespassers from their private property. Previously, property owners could post purple marks on trees or posts around an area in order to delineate their property. The legislation allows property owners to cap posts, giving property owners another way to let others know which area is their land. Provisions in the legislation make sure that these marks are visible and noticeable to individuals approaching the area.

## Fighting for Missouri's Number One Industry

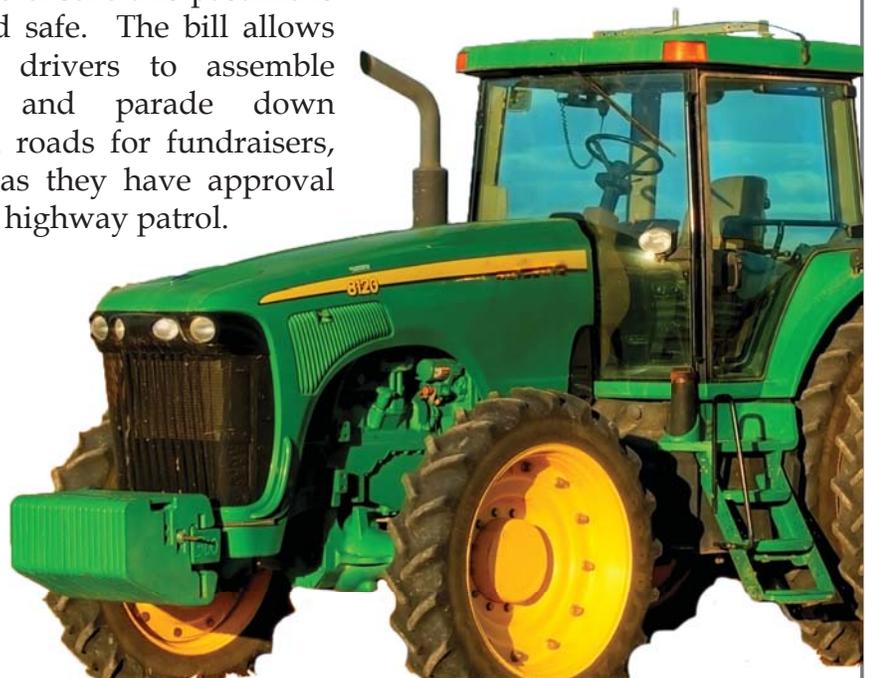
While agriculture is Missouri's biggest revenue generator, the agriculture portion of the state's budget is the lowest funded. As a member of the Appropriations Committee in the Senate, Sen. Barnitz has been working to make sure his colleagues recognize the value of agriculture. His work was evident in 2010 when, as cuts were being made to state funding across the board, several key agricultural funding items were protected.

## Protecting Rural Traditions

Non-profit, rural youth groups often use tractor parades as a fundraiser in their area. Senator Barnitz worked to pass legislation in 2009 to ensure this pastime is legal and safe. The bill allows licensed drivers to assemble tractors and parade down Missouri roads for fundraisers, as long as they have approval from the highway patrol.

## Renewable Energy from Animal Waste

Thanks to legislation sponsored by Sen. Barnitz in 2010, the Public Service Commission and the Department of Natural Resources must include methane generated from farm animal waste as a renewable energy source for purposes of meeting the state's renewable energy requirements. Anaerobic digestion of waste provides biogas, which contains about 60 percent methane that can be used to generate electricity. New technologies allow properly processed animal waste to provide a reliable and clean source of electrical and heat energy.



# Job Creation and Economic Development

Small businesses are the backbone of Missouri's economy and the key to job creation in our state. Senator Barnitz has worked to advance legislation to help small business owners and entrepreneurs in the state.

## More Quality Jobs

Senator Barnitz continues to focus on increasing the number of businesses coming to the state and making sure there are good paying jobs for Missourians. One program that helps meet this goal is the Quality Jobs Program, which provides incentives to companies that create new jobs that pay above the area's average wage and help with at least 50 percent of health insurance premiums. Since the program was created, the Legislature has passed bills to expand the program and increase benefits for small businesses and technology-based businesses.

## Helping Small Businesses

A bill passed in 2009 phases out the Corporate Franchise Tax for small businesses. The measure increases the asset threshold from \$1 million to \$10 million, providing \$12 million in tax relief for 12,000 of Missouri's 15,000 small businesses.

*Senator Barnitz hosted a meeting in March for small business owners in the 16th District to get information about state programs and services that could help their businesses.*



## Protecting Intellectual Property

In 2009, Sen. Barnitz advanced a one-of-a-kind measure to protect the intellectual property of small businesses and entrepreneurs. Some key forms of intellectual property include patents, copyrights, trademarks and trade secrets. The provision creates the Entrepreneurial Development Council in order to help individuals in Missouri guard their ideas for new products and services. The seven-member panel is composed of business people and intellectual property experts. The measure also creates the entrepreneurial development and intellectual property rights protection fund. The council has the authority to allocate money from the fund to help pay the legal fees of entrepreneurs who allege violations of their patents. The council can also allocate money from the fund to entrepreneurs who register with the council for the development, manufacture and advertisement of new products.

## Cutting Red Tape

In 2009, Sen. Barnitz successfully worked to pass the Red Tape Reduction Act, which lessens the amount of paperwork that businesses are required to submit to register their business. The bill gives businesses the option of filing corporate registration reports with the Secretary of State's Office every two years rather than every year. It also allows businesses to change the date of their filing to match tax and other paperwork deadlines. According to the Secretary of State's Office, the law makes it easier for more than 400,000 companies to do business.



## A World-Class Education

Senator Barnitz wants to make sure every Missouri student has the opportunity to pursue a world-class education and has worked to improve educational opportunities in the 16th District.

### Benefitting Local Colleges and Universities

In 2007, Sen. Barnitz supported the passage of a bill to fund several multi-million dollar capital improvement projects at colleges and universities throughout the state. This included major projects at Missouri University of Science and Technology (Missouri S&T) and Linn State Technical College. The Heavy Equipment Building at Linn State Technical College was appropriated \$5 million, and, as of this writing, the project is more than 95 percent complete. Missouri S&T received \$15 million for the Engineering Management Building, which was completed in 2009.

*Senator Barnitz speaks to a group of Maries County students visiting the Capitol on Missouri Farm Bureau Youth Leadership Day.*



### Keeping Local Control

As a former school board member, Sen. Barnitz knows that local schools know best for the students in their communities. For this reason, he has worked to stop or slow down any state or federal mandates on local school districts, allowing them to continue doing what they do best.

### Protecting Career Ladder

Each year, Career Ladder pays teachers who take on extra duties for their additional work and effort. The state pays a portion of the funding and individual school districts pay the remaining amount. Since 1992, the program has been funded retroactively, meaning the state provides funding for the work teachers complete during the school year in the budget year after the work is completed. This year, teachers throughout the state were left wondering if they were going to be compensated. Senator Barnitz fought these cuts and the funding was restored. He also helped to pass legislation that makes sure, if Career Ladder is funded in the future, that it is done ahead of time, so that teachers are not left in limbo.



## Making Missouri a Military-Friendly State

The men and women who serve this country deserve our gratitude and appreciation. Senator Barnitz wants to make sure military members and veterans in this state have access to the benefits they need and deserve.

### Serving Our Veterans

With Fort Leonard Wood in the 16th District, Sen. Barnitz is focused on making sure Missouri provides for its men and women in uniform. Since 2006, he has served on the Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission. In 2009, Sen. Barnitz was appointed to serve on the Missouri Veterans Commission after legislation passed and signed into law added legislators to the panel.

*Senator Barnitz meets with General Quantock, the commanding general of Fort Leonard Wood and his wife, Melissa Quantock.*



### Easier Overseas Voting

Legislation passed in 2010 requires the Missouri Secretary of State to establish procedures for overseas voters to request and send voter registration and absentee ballot applications electronically, resulting in a faster turn-around time. Senator Barnitz sponsored and fought for the bill to make sure that the voices of military men and women are heard and their votes are counted.

### Protecting Military Honors

A measure sponsored by Sen. Barnitz and passed by the Legislature in 2010 deals with military medals. The Missouri State Treasurer's Office maintains the Unclaimed Property Division, which collects unclaimed property and assets and holds them until claimed by the owners. At times, property, such as the contents of safe deposit boxes, are auctioned for the sake of space. The legislation requires the treasurer's office to hold and maintain military medals that have been delivered by financial institutions to the treasurer as lost or unclaimed property until the original owner or his or her heirs can be identified. This makes sure that the honors our veterans have earned are preserved for them and their children.



### No Taxes on Retirement Benefits

Legislation passed in 2009 created a state income tax exemption for any military retirement income, regardless of the retiree's age. It began with a 15 percent exemption on a veteran's military pension in 2010 and gradually increases until it becomes a 100 percent exemption in 2016. This measure encourages military members to stay in our state after they retire.

*The Missouri Veterans Cemetery broke ground on November 7, 2008. This project in Pulaski County will help honor the sacrifice and dedication of those in our community who devoted their lives to service. Work on the state level made this project possible.*



**Senator Barnitz with Amanda Schebaum, Vice President of the Hermann FFA Chapter.**



**At Sen. Barnitz's small business summit in Rolla are (from left) Sen. Barnitz; Lt. Col. Allen Rolfig of the Show-Me Heroes program; Richard LaBrash, a local business owner from Salem; Sally Hemmingway of the Department of Economic Development, and Jason Hall of the Missouri Technology Corporation.**



**Senator Barnitz with the Linn High School Jazz Band, directed by Tom Higgins. The group played at the Capitol during Fine Arts Education Day.**

**Senator Barnitz with Jim Fels, President of the Rolla Lions Club. The Rolla Lion's Club celebrated its 75th Anniversary and Sen. Barnitz honored the organization with a resolution.**



**Senator Barnitz with fourth graders from St. Joseph School in Westphalia.**

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