



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

The Rupp Report

*Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County***Column For Week of: May 10, 2010**[Website](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

My History of Protecting Children

Perhaps the biggest impact I've had personally this session is legislation that would impact the lives of children. There is no bigger joy in my life than my two kids, and to think that anyone would want to allow any kind of harm to any of these young lives or jeopardize their future in any way is a very sad mark of our society.

That is precisely why it is up to government leaders to do everything they can to make sure our children and their future are safe, and why I never hesitate to use my power as a state senator to do what I can to provide protection for their fragile lives.

My most recent example is an amendment I successfully added to House Bill 1609, a judicial bill I believe has a pretty good chance of becoming law. My amendment basically says that if a child care provider has a pending criminal charge for child abuse or child endangerment, that provider cannot continue to provide child care services until the situation is resolved. It also sets the penalties for breaking this law, and it syncs the same restrictions faced by licensed day-care providers and applies it to unlicensed providers.

This may seem like a no-brainer to most of you, but there is a loophole in the law that unfortunately resulted in a sad consequence in our state. A Missouri family lost their three-month old baby while a daycare provider cared for their little boy. While the provider faced charges of involuntary manslaughter and abuse of a child resulting in death, the family was horrified to learn – as was I – that the unlicensed provider continued to care for other children. With the Senate's full support of this amendment, I hope we can equalize this law and make sure this type of situation never happens again.

My record on protecting the well-being of children stands for itself. Just this session alone, I have continued to fight for pro-life legislation, autism spectrum disorder health care insurance, charter schools, and early high school graduation. Throughout the last few years, I have passed new laws to reform Missouri's outdated harassment and stalking laws to protect children from cyber stalkers and increase penalties for adults that prey on children over the internet. I have also increased protections for our children against sexual predators and protected and improved important early intervention services for children with special needs. I want every Missouri child to have the bright and boundless future that they can make for themselves, and I will continue to support legislation that upholds that notion.

This passion might be the father in me, because when I'm faced with tough decisions, I just look around my office at the drawings or photos of my kids, and it never fails to bring clarity. Or maybe it's the hundreds of children that come to visit me in the Capitol each and every year, who ask me what it takes to do my job.

Wherever that inspiration to protect children comes from, I'm glad it's there, because it colors everything I do in Jefferson City.

I will never look back at any of my legislation and wonder if I did enough to protect children. If you have any questions about any of the work I have done, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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