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Voter I.D. and Other Important Legislation for 2011

Among the important pieces of legislation for the upcoming legislative session will be a bill on "voter I.D." to protect the integrity of the state's elections.

[Senate Bill 3](#) would require a voter to show a picture I.D. — a state-issued identification card or a driver's license — before that person could vote. However, this would not mean you would be escorted from the premises if you could not produce a card. Those without a voter I.D. would be allowed to cast a provisional vote, as long as they came back to the polling place with a photo I.D. sometime before the polls close.

This is an issue that has come up numerous times in recent years, only to be squashed by opponents. We need a picture identification card for just about everything these days, even to rent a movie. In fact, UPS recently announced it would require customers to show photo I.D. before receiving their packages.

Along with this bill, I have introduced [Senate Joint Resolution 2](#), which would allow a voter I.D.

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provision to go on a future ballot and let folks throughout Missouri share their views on the issue by amending our state's constitution. If voters were to pass the amendment, then local election authorities would be responsible for starting the program and they would be reimbursed for costs by the state.

I have also prefiled several other bills for the 2011 legislative session. Among them are:

- [Senate Bill 4](#), which would repeal Proposition B, a new law that infringes on Missourians' rights to raise animals.
- [Senate Bill 5](#), which would require drug testing for folks who are eligible for a welfare program called "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families," or TANF.

The "[Puppy Mill Cruelty Prevention Act](#)" came about as a result of Proposition B, which was on the November ballot. This new law was approved by urban voters, and soundly defeated in rural Missouri. I said from the beginning that the proposition was the result of an out-of-state group coming in and pouring millions of dollars into an issue meant to mislead the public. I want to reverse the harmful effects of the measure and keep those outsiders from coming back and telling us how many head of cattle we can have, or how many horses, or anything else that could permanently damage the agriculture industry in Missouri.

I have proposed drug testing for TANF recipients for years. This is taxpayer money going to unemployed people to help raise their kids. Unfortunately, we have no way to make sure this money is going toward helping needy families and not supporting drug use. My common-sense proposal would ensure that we are using taxpayer dollars wisely in helping folks who need short-term benefits.

The Legislature will have a busy session ahead. As was the case last year, the budget will be the focal point. Our job will be to bring forth a balanced budget — one that will NOT raise anybody's taxes — and will support policies that will put people back to work throughout Missouri.

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.

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