

State Senator
Doug Libla
District 25 Legislative Review



Dear Friends,

The First Regular Session of the 99th General Assembly has concluded, as well as two extraordinary sessions and veto session, with major victories achieved on behalf of our state's citizens and businesses.

This year, I was honored to be appointed chairman of the Senate Small Business and Industry Committee. This committee is responsible for considering legislation relating to the ownership and operation of small businesses, labor management, industrial development, fair employment standards, workers' compensation and employment security within the state.

Our economic engine is made up of family farms, small businesses, manufacturing, schools and hospitals, all requiring investment in 21st century technology. Well maintained highways, rail systems and water ports are critical as well. In addition, our beautiful lakes, rivers and hunting land make our district diverse and attractive to visitors.

Thank you very much for your letters, phone calls and e-mails of support. I appreciate your interest in the legislative process. If there is a bill that you are passionate about, the best way to make a difference is by visiting your State Capitol and testifying at the committee hearing. We enjoy hearing from you; it makes a big difference!

The Missouri Senate will reconvene on Jan. 3 and I look forward to continuing my service to you and the entire 25th District. Until then, I will be traveling the district, meeting folks and learning more about issues that matter to you.

Please follow me on social media and my Senate website for the latest news.

Warm Regards,

Senator Doug Libla
25th District
201 W. Capitol Ave.
Room 219
Jefferson City, MO 65101
(573) 751-4843
www.senate.mo.gov/libla
doug.libla@senate.mo.gov



Labor Reform

By reforming some of our state's labor laws, we fundamentally changed the way Missouri does business. Allowing businesses the opportunity to create better jobs with growing incomes will lead to stronger economic growth. It is time to make Missouri a pro-worker state.

After years of debate, we finally passed Right to Work in Senate Bill 19, creating new provisions of law relating to labor organizations. Missouri is losing jobs and population to our Right to Work neighboring states. Studies show that Right to Work states have higher levels of economic growth, attract more new businesses, have increased job and wage growth and create a competitive business climate.

By allowing workers' choice, we are cultivating a free and fair environment in our state. Right to Work is the single biggest policy that can help protect a worker's freedom to choose. Right to Work holds unions accountable by encouraging unions to work harder to represent the interests of their members. This not only benefits businesses, but the employees, the employees' families and even the unions themselves.

Due to a successful initiative petition, voters will now have the opportunity to determine if Missouri becomes a Right to Work state. The vote is scheduled to take place during the November election in 2018.

Real ID Fix

House Bill 151 was passed this session and became law. This bill requires the Department of Revenue to issue REAL ID compliant driver's licenses, unless the applicant requests a license that is not compliant with the REAL ID.

House Bill 151, the "REAL ID Fix," gives Missourians the freedom to choose if they want a REAL ID-compliant photo ID or not. Without this solution, there would have been a financial strain on families by requiring them to purchase passports in order to fly domestically, enter a federal building or go on a military base. Missourians should have the right to decide for themselves if they want, or need, a REAL ID compliant photo ID.

This bill creates a path to REAL ID, but preserves the current Missouri ID as an option, producing a solution to privacy concerns and meeting the federal deadline. It is the best option for Missouri residents when it comes to REAL ID.

The legislation also retains Missourians' rights to continue with non-compliant IDs, ensuring that private documents will not be retained for storage purposes and/or sent to the federal government.



Senator Libla takes a few moments to visit with students and teachers from First Baptist School from Poplar Bluff.



Senator Libla addresses his Senate colleagues during session.

Tort Reform

Missouri's unfair and outdated civil judicial system has been forcing many businesses and job creators out of the state. Tort reform is critical to economic development. These reforms will create a better business climate allowing businesses to hire employees rather than waste money on frivolous lawsuits.

I was proud to guide House Bill 153 through the Senate. The bill pertains to expert testimony in our state's court system. The question HB 153 is answering is this: how do we know if an expert witness is truly an expert and if the information he/she testifies to is reliable?

By adopting the new standard, which is known as the Daubert Standard, it empowers Missouri judges to act as gatekeepers by closely examining expert testimony that plaintiffs and defendants seek to present in court. Addressing admissibility of evidence prior to trial, while requiring an initial investment of time, helps avoid fights at trial over expert evidence, wasting jury time with cases lacking scientific merit and needless litigation.

Notable Legislation for the 25th District

House Bill 1 was passed during special session in May to help attract a large steel mill and create jobs in New Madrid County. In 2016, Noranda Aluminum, a great place to work for many decades, closed and over 900 jobs were lost. The community and the region were crippled economically by the closure. Household income quickly dropped in the area, forcing many families to leave their homes and/or seek assistance from the state.

The legislation permits electric suppliers the ability to negotiate a special rate with the steel mill and an aluminum smelter and to negotiate a longer term contract. The Public Service Commission will be able to consider and grant a special rate to large users of electricity at a reasonable cost when considering whether to locate and invest in the state of Missouri.

SPOTLIGHT in the 25th District

Echo Bluff State Park, which opened in 2016, is a destination that features a stunning natural setting. Located deep in the Ozarks on Highway 19, just north of Eminence, the park is situated in a scenic valley with towering bluffs and hillsides covered in oak, hickory and shortleaf pine trees. The park's namesake, Echo Bluff, is a large sheer bluff overlooking the beautiful main lodge and RV camping area. Just below this geological wonder is Sinking Creek, a crystal-clear Ozark stream that serves as the second-largest tributary to the Current River.

The park offers camping, hiking trails, fishing lakes, wild horse herds, fine dining and tours of historic buildings on the property. I firmly believe this magnificent family-friendly park will become a "year-round" destination in a very short time. Many tourists are now staying longer, branching out to many other communities and spending more vacation dollars.



In addition, the park is close to the Current and Jacks Fork Rivers, Mark Twain National Forest and several state conservation areas. With so many nearby options to explore, Echo Bluff State Park serves as the base for a complete Ozark experience.

Please take the time and go visit YOUR newest state park. You will be impressed! For more info go to www.mostateparks.com

Echo Bluff State Park offers stunning views, camping, hiking and many other family-friendly amenities.



MISSOURI STATE SENATOR DOUG LIBLA

201 W Capitol Ave. Rm. 219
Jefferson City, MO 65101

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
JEFFERSON CITY, MO
65101
PERMIT No. 220

SENATOR DOUG LIBLA

25TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

WWW.SENATE.MO.GOV/LIBLA

Legislative Staff:

Proudly serving the citizens
of Butler, Carter, Dunklin,
Mississippi, New Madrid,
Pemiscot, Shannon and
Stoddard counties in the
Missouri Senate.



Ashley Bax
Legislative Director



Billy Pat Wright
Field Representative