

SENATOR DOUG LIBLA - DISTRICT 25

CAPITOL REPORT

97th General Assembly
First Regular Session
2013



Dear Friends,

The First Regular Session of the 97th General Assembly and recent annual veto session has come and gone. We made a great deal of progress during this year's legislative session.

Personally, one of my most concerning and important issues was protecting families and businesses from unfair utility surcharges that were overwhelmingly supported by many in the Legislature on both sides of the aisle. Electric, gas and water companies spent a tremendous amount of money running advertisements and employed many lobbyists to push their agenda.

A considerable amount of my time and energy was used in helping building a coalition in opposition to Senate Bill 207 (Electric ISRS - Infrastructure System Replacement Surcharge) and ultimately participating in a filibuster to prevent its passage. Also, we were successful in stopping additional legislation that would have added charges to your gas and water bills. Not everyone in the 25th District receives their utility bills from these particular companies. However, it would have eventually had an adverse affect on your utility costs.

After being elected to the Missouri Senate last November, my priority was to develop relationships with my colleagues and invite them to visit Southeast Missouri. From our schools and colleges, farms to businesses, and ports and highways, including tourism with beautiful lakes, rivers and timberland, our district is very diverse and vital to the success of our local and state economies. By hosting three legislative tours with elected officials from Kansas City, St. Louis, and Springfield, we raised awareness, and highlighted and promoted the resources we have.

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 in January, and I look forward to continuing my service to you and the whole 25th District. Until then, I will be traveling the district, meeting folks and building my knowledge about the issues that matter.

Best regards,

Doug Libla



State Senator Doug Libla

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

Distribution of Each Tax Dollar

Fiscal Year 2014 Truly Agreed To and Finally Passed Operating Budget — All Funds: \$24.801 Billion



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Judiciary, Public Safety & Corrections - 6.39¢ | 7. Social Services - 34.47¢ |
| 2. Public Debt - 0.29¢ | 8. Employee Benefits - 3.57¢ |
| 3. Health & Mental Health - 10.97¢ | 9. Highways & Transportation - 8.57¢ |
| 4. All Other Agencies* - 4.26¢ | 10. Elementary & Secondary Education - 22.19¢ |
| 5. Economic Development, Labor & Insurance - 2.15¢ | 11. Higher Education - 4.88¢ |
| 6. Agriculture, Conservation & Natural Resources - 2.24¢ | |

* Revenue, Office of Administration, Elected Officials, General Assembly, Real Estate

Ensuring Utility Rates Don't Burn a Hole in Your Pocketbook

Senate Bill 207 would have allowed investor-owned monopoly utilities to circumvent the Public Service Commission (PSC) and allow a new Infrastructure System Replacement Surcharge (ISRS). If passed, the bill would have undermined the oversight and general rate-making process that has worked for more than 100 years through our investor-owned monopoly utility consumer protection department, the PSC.

It was disappointing to discover that in just the last six years, one big investor-owned electric utility had already cashed in on more than \$607 million in general rate increases (a 43 percent increase) and more than \$560 million in surcharges. Our hard-working families

and businesses cannot tolerate a continuation of out-of-control electric cost. Automatic surcharges cause serious harm to folks who are already living under a tight budget. After

all, consumers have no options in the marketplace to get these services elsewhere. These utility monopolies enjoy having no competitors, so we need to hold them accountable for their attempts to artificially raise rates to bolster their shareholders' dividends.



Maintaining Missouri's Lead Mining Industry

House Bill 650 preserves a safe lead mining industry while protecting hundreds of jobs throughout Southeast Missouri.

The General Assembly, by successfully overriding the governor's veto, put a \$2.5 million cap on punitive damages assessed in health-related claims against companies that own underground mining operations, including one of Missouri's largest employers. Prior to this legislation, we were at risk of losing this valuable industry because of unlimited liability exposure.

There are many mines that were built decades ago in the Southeast Missouri region, known as "The Lead Belt." Today, there are safety measures for both our workers and our environment that address this once loosely regulated industry. We want to ensure lead mining industries are able to invest and expand in the future by running safe, modern operations that will supply much-needed jobs to hundreds of hard-working Missourians.

Many towns in Southeast Missouri depend on the mining industry. Though this legislation only addresses the lead mining operations in the Southeast Missouri area, it has an overwhelmingly positive impact on our entire state and local economy.

This bill will ensure the future of the last lead producer in the United States, and we will continue to promote and develop a clean lead industry in Missouri through our work on the Missouri Lead Industry Employment, Economic Development and Environmental Remediation Task Force, on which I serve as a member.



Protecting Family Farms

Senate Bill 16, sent to the governor during session and signed into law, will allow Missourians under the age of 16 to perform day-to-day tasks, such as operating power-driven machinery, climbing ladders, and learning and performing other important jobs, on their family farms. This also allows our children the opportunity to work and earn money on their neighbors' farms. We must support the hard work of our self-employed farm owners and encourage their youth to continue this tradition. Agriculture has been and will continue to be a major component of our state's economy.



Sen. Libla serves as the vice chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources Committee, pictured above.

Tax Credits

Legislation passed by General Assembly and signed into law benefits certain organizations that utilize benevolent tax credits.

Senate Bill 20, 15 & 19 includes the Public Safety Officer Surviving Spouse tax credit, the Children in Crisis — later named the Champion for Children — tax credit, the Rebuilding Communities tax credit, and the Pregnancy Resource and Food Pantry tax credits, among others. Benevolent tax credits benefit charitable, rather than profit-making, entities. Although, I do believe the Legislature needs to rein in the allocation of various tax credits, these benevolent tax credits re-establish and continue the work of many important groups that truly work for the betterment of Missouri citizens. The surviving spouses of public safety officers killed in the line of duty and children who have experienced or are at risk for abuse or neglect need these services. Allowing eligible businesses and community-minded individuals to continue making donations to qualified charities and food pantries is and has been life-changing to many folks in need.



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Capitol Report

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Driver's License Policy Violated State Law and Citizens' Privacy

When elected to serve the citizens of the 25th Senate District, I promised to represent the people of Southeast Missouri and the Bootheel by listening to their concerns and protecting the quality of life for all Missourians.

This past September, an analysis conducted by the state auditor's office confirmed that Missouri officials violated state law in December 2012 by requiring driver's license clerks to make electronic copies of applicants' birth certificates and other personal documents, without first publishing a formal rule change.

Next year this personal information needs further safeguarding as the Missouri Department of Revenue (DOR) makes security improvements to driver's license procedures, such as protecting against identity fraud.

Privacy concerns started when an issue was brought to light in Stoddard County earlier this year regarding the illegal collection and use of private documents by employees within DOR when citizens tried to obtain certain documents, such as concealed carry (CCW) gun permits. This invasion-of-privacy action in my district sparked legal action against DOR.

When law-abiding citizens refused to let the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) within DOR scan their personal documents, it resulted in denial of the permits in which they were seeking. These individuals should have been able to obtain these permits because they passed the application process and followed all the rules set forth by the state.

In 2009, the General Assembly passed House Bill 361, which



prohibits DOR from amending its driver's license application procedures to retain and collect personal documents in order to comply with the federal REAL ID Act of 2005, which shares citizens' private information with third-party entities and the federal government.

Senate Bill 252 became law and now prohibits DOR from retaining copies of source documents used to obtain various licenses, this includes using technology – much like what was used at the DMV in Stoddard County – to digitally save documents so they can be easily forwarded electronically, such as through e-mail or saved in third-party or federal databases.

This unlawful action discovered in Stoddard County had already spread to other areas throughout our state. Without my informed and alert constituents, this illegal action might have gone unnoticed for a longer amount of time. Many Missourians were wrongly impacted and inconvenienced when licensing offices in their area would not issue CCWs due to legal injunctions.

DOR needed to stop the collection and sharing of private data belonging to our citizens. Senate Bill 252 now protects the civil liberties and rights of all Missourians. I fully support our right to keep personal information confidential.