



2013 End of Session Report

SENATOR ROB SCHAAF



THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE YOU...

It is a privilege to represent our community in the heart of our state government. This newsletter will give you an overview of the Missouri Legislature's accomplishments throughout the 2013 legislative session. It also highlights harmful bills that were put to a stop before they could reach the governor's desk.

My goal in the upper chamber is to encourage economic development and a competitive job market for our state, which will provide a better future for Missouri families. The Show-Me State is home to hard-working citizens who want to see more of their hard-earned dollars in their wallets, a quality education for their children, and solutions to problems in our health care system. I do everything in my power to ensure your voices are heard loud and clear in the Missouri Senate.

If you have any questions or need assistance with matters pertaining to our community or state government, please don't hesitate to contact my Capitol office.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Schaaf".

Senator Rob Schaaf, 34th District

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LEGISLATION TAKES EFFECT IN MISSOURI

Addressing Missouri's Second Injury Fund

This year, one of the biggest priorities was bringing Missouri's Second Injury Fund back from bankruptcy; the insolvent fund was a result of the recent recession. The fund relieves employers from liability for a subsequent injury suffered by a worker while in their employment. Countless citizens are waiting on their settlements from the fund.

Senate Bill 1 creates a funding mechanism to bolster the Second Injury Fund; a supplemental surcharge not to exceed 3 percent of net premiums from 2014 to 2021 would be imposed. The bill also only takes care of total disability, and states that occupational diseases are exclusively covered under workers' compensation laws. The measure helps Missourians who have had the unfortunate experience of sustaining injuries at work, while protecting Missouri businesses from crippling liability.

Senate Bill 1 was signed by the governor on July 10 and will take effect on Jan. 1, 2014.

Benevolent Tax Credits: Encouraging Charitable Donations

Senate Bill 20 was signed by the governor on March 29 and extends certain benevolent tax credits — credits that encourage people to personally donate to local programs — to people who make donations to pregnancy centers, child crisis nurseries, and food pantries. Donating to these programs is not only kind-hearted, but it eases pressure on the state budget and helps avoid bureaucracy and the political process. As the legislation had an emergency clause, it took effect immediately upon the governor's signature.

Defending Citizens' Privacy

This session, the Missouri Senate uncovered problems and illegal activity regarding the Missouri Department of Revenue (DOR), which caused countless Missourians to fear for their privacy. When citizens sought certain documents, such as CCW permits and driver's licenses, DOR scanned their personal documents and retained them in a database. DOR was also charged with sharing that information with third party entities, including those with ties to the federal government. Citizens were outraged the federal government had its hands on a list containing all Missourians with CCWs.

To combat this problem and be sure that government officials and departments don't go beyond the scope of their power, a bill was passed (**SB 252**) to prohibit DOR from retaining copies of source documents presented by Missourians applying for driver's and non-driver's licenses. The legislation was signed by the governor on July 1 and took effect immediately upon receipt of his signature.

Health Care in Missouri

As a physician, I take seriously the ongoing challenge of ensuring quality health services are available throughout Missouri. A bill signed by the governor in July has the potential to turn the health insurance marketplace on its head.

Senate Bill 262, among other provisions, permits licensed insurance carriers to issue policies for exclusive in-network plans that are very restrictive in terms of the number of providers a patient has access to visiting. Reaching a compromise with those who support the restrictive plans, I pushed that the new law requires health carriers to accept any willing licensed physician into its exclusive network, as long as the doctor agrees to accept payment or reimbursement that is 15 percent less than the health carrier's standard fee schedule. This permits the patient/doctor relationship to continue, despite a change to the new exclusive network plans.

The legislation also prohibits larger deductibles, co-payments, or co-insurance amounts for services using tele-medicine compared to the same health care service provided through face-to-face meetings with your provider.



Prevailing Wage: Continuing Projects and Jobs in Rural Areas

This year, the Missouri Legislature passed the most substantial reforms to prevailing wage laws in 40 years. Prevailing wage establishes a minimum wage rate that must be paid to workers on public works construction projects in Missouri, such as bridges, roads, and government buildings. Currently, prevailing wage rates are too high for rural areas in our state. Important public projects are being abandoned, thus eliminating jobs. **House Bill 34** establishes a new method for calculating the prevailing wage for third and fourth class counties. By streamlining prevailing wage laws, we can make public projects more affordable, thus bringing more work and jobs to Missouri. The legislation took effect on Aug. 28.



Protecting Our Second Amendment Rights

Within the last year, our country has seen tragic situations unfold involving dangerous, armed intruders. The federal government has touted increased gun control measures, but these attempts are misguided and will not solve problems of gun violence. Brushing a problem under a rug does not accomplish anything. What we need is increased education about firearms, so citizens know what to do, should the unthinkable happen in Missouri.

The Legislature sent to the governor a bill (**HB 436**) that would have established the Second Amendment Preservation Act and rejected all federal acts that infringe on citizens' Second Amendment rights. The bill would have prohibited political subdivisions from banning anyone with a valid concealed carry endorsement to openly carry a firearm, allowed schools to designate teachers or administrators as school protection officers who would have to carry a firearm at all times while on school property, and lowered the age for conceal carry from 21 to 19 years old, among other provisions. Unfortunately, the legislation was vetoed by the governor on July 5. I will continue to advocate for increased protection of our Second Amendment rights.

PUTTING AN END TO CERTAIN BILLS

As a lawmaker, my job is to not only endorse good public policy that will improve the well-being of Missouri citizens, but to prevent bad bills from becoming law. Although people don't always agree, I do my best to promote the best interests of all my constituents and the people of the Show-Me State.

There are two bills in which I stood up with my colleagues in opposition. One of them was **SB 207**, which would have allowed electric corporations to recover costs for infrastructure replacement projects. The legislation would've placed too much power in the hands of big companies and diminished the voices of customers — particularly seniors who are living on a fixed income. I want to be sure the hard-working people in our community aren't suffering from unnecessary high bills. In addition, media reports have cited studies noting that if electric rates were increased by 10 percent, as the electric ISRS (Infrastructure System Replacement Surcharge) allows, Missouri would lose 60,000 jobs. I don't want monopolies dictating how Missouri tax dollars are used.

Another bill that would've caused harm to Missourians is **SJR 16**, which would have put to a vote of the people a proposal to impose a temporary one cent sales and use tax for transportation purposes. Although maintaining and improving our roads is important, an increase in taxes is not the way to get our problems resolved. Many families' finances are already tight, and we shouldn't fix our roads at the crippling expense of families. Tax reform — not raising taxes — is a better solution than taking more dollars out of the people's wallets to revitalize our state's services. These are uncertain times, and Missourians need as much financial security as possible.



Senator Schaaf and Sen. Brown discuss a bill on the Senate floor.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

THE MISSOURI SENATE WEBSITE

WWW.SENATE.MO.GOV

- Learn about bills sent to the governor.
- Read about how a bill becomes a law.
- Find news pertaining to the Missouri Senate.
- Research the past session archive.
- Find information about Capitol tours.
- Read a glossary of legislative terms.
- Find information about legislative committees.

UNCLAIMED PROPERTY IN MISSOURI

WWW.SHOWMEMONEY.COM

- The state treasurer's office is holding more than \$750 million in unclaimed assets in more than 4.4 million owner accounts.
- One in 10 Missourians has unclaimed property.
- The average return is \$300.
- You can learn how you can find your property and search the unclaimed property database.



Senator Schaaf visits with students at the Missouri Capitol.

Senator Rob Schaaf

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PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE CAPITOL



Senator Schaaf presides over the Missouri Senate chamber.



Senator Schaaf visits with professionals from a Kansas City contracting business.



Senator Schaaf visits with students enrolled in a health care program at Northland Career Center.

FISCAL YEAR 2014 BUDGET

Before the 2013 legislative session came to a close, the Missouri Legislature sent to the governor a fiscally responsible and balanced budget for FY 2014, which began July 1, 2013, and will go through June 30, 2014. Unlike our federal government, which is often guilty of reckless spending, the Missouri Constitution requires a balanced budget. The Legislature's nearly \$25 billion budget plan funds critical state programs. Highlights of this year's budget include increased funding for Missouri's K-12 schools and the state's public higher education institutions, as well as an annual salary boost for all state employees starting January 2014.

In years past, Missouri has had to tighten its belt and watch carefully how dollars are spent, much like many families in our state. Although lawmakers often have to make tough budgetary choices, this year, we were happy to see greater revenues and a decrease in unemployment. This is positive news, but that doesn't mean we can let down our guard. We need to continue to make wise financial decisions for the well-being of Missouri families.

