



Increasing Access to
New Medical Treatments
for Missourians



Missouri's Criminal Code
Gets First Comprehensive
Overhaul Since 1979



Overview of Missouri's
Fiscal Year 2015
Budget



SENATOR JAY WASSON 20TH DISTRICT

2014 Session Overview

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As another legislative year winds down, I'd like to take this opportunity to once again offer my sincerest gratitude for allowing me to serve you in the Missouri Senate. It is an honor to represent the best region in the state, with some of the finest citizens in the world. In this annual newsletter, you'll find information on some of the major issues of the 2014 session and legislation I sponsored to better the lives of all Missourians. If I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

CONTACT

SENATOR WASSON

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Protecting Minors from Alternative Nicotine Products

This year, I filed Senate Bill 841, which modifies provisions relating to alternative nicotine or vapor products, commonly known as e-cigarettes and vaporizers. The sole purpose of this bill is to ensure children and young teenagers are not able to buy these nicotine products here in Missouri.

The legislation establishes a state law prohibiting those under 18 years of age from buying e-cigarettes and nicotine vaporizers. The legislation does not establish taxes on these devices, other than sales tax, which is an entirely different discussion that will more than likely take place at a later date. Right now, the safety of our youth is my primary concern.

The FDA will eventually take action and begin regulating e-cigarettes and nicotine vaporizers. At that point, federal law will likely supersede what we pass. But until the federal government starts taking action on an industry that is badly in need of oversight and public protections, we need legislation to keep these devices out of the hands of our kids.

REVISING MISSOURI'S OUTDATED CRIMINAL CODE

For the last eight years, a number of lawmakers have worked on legislation to overhaul our state's criminal code, something that has not been successfully done since 1979. Senate Bill 491 came out of those efforts and was filed in the Legislature this year. The Senate spent many hours working through each and every provision of the legislation, a necessary but time-consuming process.

The legislation updates the penalties for certain crimes; creates new felony and misdemeanor classes; reforms our state's elderly and vulnerable person abuse laws; and strengthens the laws against those who sexually abuse children, among numerous other provisions.

A strong, modern legal system is critical in protecting the public's safety. Reforming our criminal code was long overdue. Prosecutors, criminal defenders and members of the judicial branch have all worked hard to develop the new code and pushed for these revisions. I'm proud we accomplished such a huge undertaking this year.



SENATOR WASSON'S 2014 LEGISLATION

SENATE BILL 690 specifies that a Greene County emergency telephone service board is not a political subdivision unless the county commissioners adopt an order reclassifying the board as such.

SENATE BILL 691 modifies insurance policy cancellation and reinstatement requirements and allows homeowners to receive sinkhole coverage through the Missouri Fair Plan.

HOUSE BILLS 1735 AND 1618, which contain provisions based on my legislation, Senate Bill 707, modifies the definition of ATVs, recreational off-highway vehicles and utility vehicles.

SENATE BILL 808 modifies provisions of law relating to the licensure and scope of practice for healthcare professions.

SENATE BILL 809 modifies provisions of law regarding licensing of architects, professional engineers, professional land surveyors and professional landscape architects.

SENATE BILL 841 modifies provisions relating to alternative nicotine or vapor products.

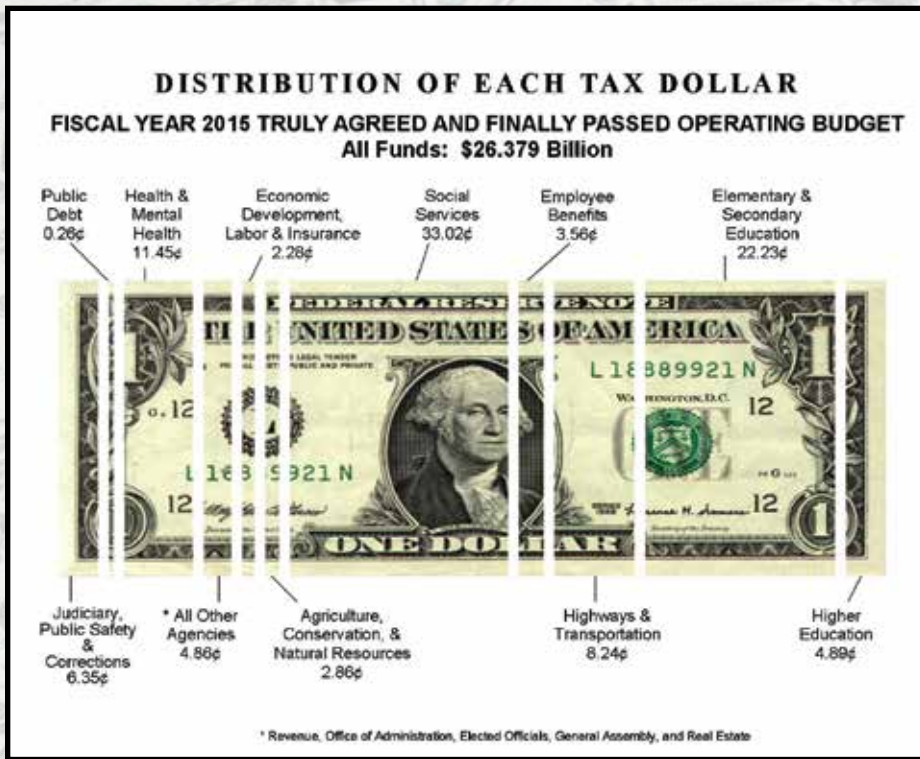
SENATE BILL 866 preempts local laws that would modify current state law governing the manner in which traditional installment loan lenders are allowed to make loans.

HOUSE BILL 1218 modifies regulations on collection of delinquent assessments on a condominium.

HOUSE BILL 1968 modifies regulatory examinations of health maintenance organizations and subjects health organizations to risk-based capital analysis.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 36 establishes a Multiple Sclerosis Task Force.

FY 2015 BUDGET BREAKDOWN



Providing New Medical Treatments for Missourians

This year, the Senate made it a priority to address the price disparity between traditional chemotherapy treatment and oral chemotherapy, a new, and less severe, option many patients would prefer but can't afford. Senate Bill 668 requires health benefit plans to establish equal out-of-pocket costs for covered oral and intravenously administered chemotherapy medications.

We approved Senate Bill 754, which extends the MoRx Prescription Drug Program that assists low income and disabled seniors in purchasing prescription drugs. The beneficial program was set to expire this year, which would have affected more than 200,000 seniors.

We also sent to the governor Senate Bill 639, which requires doctors to advise women with dense breast tissue about the potential benefits of additional testing in detecting breast cancer.

In addition, we passed House Bill 2238, which allows patients with intractable epilepsy—individuals, including many children, who suffer from severe seizures that don't respond to current forms of treatment—to take an oil extracted from hemp plants, which is shown to be incredibly effective in treating the symptoms of this form of epilepsy.

MISSOURI EDUCATION STANDARDS

During the 2014 session, the Legislature approved House Bill 1490, which, among other provisions, establishes workgroups to create the new Missouri Learning Standards.

The goal of HB 1490 is to create learning standards that best fit our state and its students, maintaining the local control we need to give our children a world-class education.

The process will be completed in an open and transparent way, so that the public will have ample opportunities to comment on the creation of the new standards.

The workgroups, made up of parents and educational professionals, will make their recommendations to the State Board of Education by Oct. 15, 2015.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS TASK FORCE

This year I filed Senate Concurrent Resolution 36, which establishes a Multiple Sclerosis Task Force, made up of members from both chambers and healthcare professionals, to identify and address the unmet needs of persons with MS in order to enhance the quality of life and provide them with greater access to various treatments and other therapeutic options.

The group will report its findings to the Legislature by Jan. 1, 2015.

GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTMENTS



I was honored this year to sponsor the appointment of local resident Virginia Fry to the Missouri State University Board of Governors. Ms. Fry's appointment was confirmed by the full Senate.

State Senator Jay Wasson

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SINKHOLE INSURANCE FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

One of the measures I filed, which was ultimately signed by the governor, addresses a problem that has long plagued our area: sinkholes. Over the years, I've seen firsthand numerous sinkholes in our region—some small, some large enough to swallow a house. These natural geological occurrences pose a serious risk to citizens and their personal property.

Southwest Missouri is particularly vulnerable to sinkholes due to our state having what's known as a karst landscape, which is a geological formation caused by subterranean drainage wearing away carbonate rock, like limestone, something Missouri has in abundance. The Ozark Plateau, upon which our district sits, is one of the largest karst regions in the nation.

Senate Bill 691 allows homeowners to receive sinkhole coverage through the Missouri Property Insurance Placement Facility, also known as the Missouri Fair Plan. The bill in no way mandates that people have sinkhole insurance; it simply gives residents in our area a way to cover their personal property from sinkhole damage. Having filed this bill in previous years, I was happy to see the General Assembly approve legislation that offers financial protection for 20th District residents from sinkholes.

Welcoming Visitors to the Capitol

Every year, I'm proud to welcome visitors from the 20th District to the Capitol. I've long believed a strong democracy depends upon an ongoing conversation between citizens and their representatives. I always enjoy seeing people from back home, and I am eager to hear your thoughts and ideas on state government. If you plan on visiting the Capitol, please contact my office for any help or assistance in arranging a tour.



Sen. Jay Wasson, R-Nixa, visits with retired educators who came to the Capitol for Missouri Retired Teachers Association Day on Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014.