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Helping Spure Job Creation

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Helping Spure Job Creation

By Rob Mayer

When we began the legislative session in January, I set an agenda geared toward putting Missourians back to work. As we pass the mid-term point, I am glad to report the Senate has passed and sent to the House three bills aimed at creating a business environment that will help put Missourians back to work in good-paying jobs with benefits.

The first measure, Senate Bill 19, would give businesses the ability to reinvest in hiring new employees by passing a bill freezing and then phasing out the Corporate Franchise Tax. By limiting and then ending this double taxation on employers, we eliminate a disincentive that penalized companies for investing more in our state. Now, companies can invest in hiring new employees instead of growing government through higher taxes.

The second measure would improve an employer's ability to hire and retain quality workers by ending lawsuit abuses — bringing state law in line with federal human rights laws. Senate Bill 188 would make Missouri employment law mirror the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. Currently there is no harmony in how employment law is treated between federal standards, state law and how our three appellate courts in Missouri have ruled on the law. By harmonizing our state employment law with federal employment law, Missouri companies can invest more in hiring new employees rather than expansive legal fees to navigate a current system riddled with uncertainty.

The third measure would abrogate a judicial decision made last fall and restore

protections for Missouri employees. Senate Bill 8 would protect Missouri employees from personal lawsuits for their role in honest accidents at work. With this change, employers and employees will no longer have to purchase insurance to protect themselves from claims that should have never been dealt with outside of the Workers' Compensation System.

These three bills have advanced through the Senate and are now being considered by the House. Each will help rebuild Missouri's business climate to help put the more than 280,000 citizens that have been out of work for a year and a half back to work.

Improving Missouri's budget situation is directly related to improving Missouri's economic situation. As we work to spur job creation, we will also work to create a budget that is sustainable for Missouri taxpayers. Missouri reached a high water mark in 2008 taking in a little more than \$8 Billion. Just two years later, the state's general revenue plummeted to \$6.774 Billion. In just two short years, Missouri's base revenue dropped by \$1.3 Billion. Despite what the federal government says, a billion dollars goes a long way here in Missouri. As Missourians return to work, this base will again grow. In the meantime, we will continue to shrink the size and scope of government and closely examine how every dollar is spent. I will keep you apprised as the budget comes to the floor in the coming weeks for discussion.

Please feel free to contact me throughout the year with any comments, questions, or issues using the information listed below and on my website at www.senate.mo.gov/mayer.

Rob Mayer, R-Dexter, represents the 25th State Senatorial District in the Missouri State Senate and serves the state as the President Pro Tem of the State Senate.

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