

The Mayer Report



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Mayer Returns to Jeff City for Special Session

SEPTEMBER 07TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

Mayer Returns to Jeff City for Special Session

When lawmakers return to Jefferson City in September for the annual veto session, they may also address issues that will be a part of the First Extraordinary Session of the 96th General Assembly.

As was the case last year, when the governor called the Legislature back to the Capitol, jobs and economic development will be the focal point again this year. What makes this special session different from last years, instead of a bill aimed at one company, all of Missouri is said benefit from the items on the agenda.

Proponents of the newest “eco devo” legislation say the total package could save Missouri \$1.5 billion over the next decade. This proposal includes several key elements that have been worked out by a number of folks since the regular legislative session ended in May.

Limiting Tax Credits

At the top of the list is tax credit reform. The Low-Income Housing and Historic Preservation tax credit programs could see reductions, as could other tax credits that were mentioned by the governor’s Tax Credit Review Commission, which met last year. Many folks are disappointed these credits are not part of the appropriations process. In other words, when lawmakers put together the state’s budget, the money that goes toward tax credits is not figured in. I have often said if tax credits were a part of the budget, may not even exist.

Creating a Trade Hub with China

These cost reductions listed above would help fund the “Aerotropolis Trade Incentive Act,” which supporters say will help Lambert-St. Louis International Airport become a major trade hub. Over a 15-year period, \$360 million in tax credits would be utilized to make this a reality. Many believe this will help move agriculture products overseas. Others say trade with China is a losing game for the United States and we should support existing infrastructure, not just a handful of investors.

More Spending in Missouri

Also included in the proposal are incentives to get amateur sporting events and data centers into Missouri. Some say these are beneficial ideas that would boost the economy for towns of every size. In addition, the “Missouri Science and Innovation Reinvestment Act” (MOSIRA) is designed to start the process of creating high-paying 21st century jobs that could put Missouri ahead of several states, in terms of job growth, retention and creation. Some worry MOSIRA funding may lead to unethical bioscience research. Others believe public investment in the private industry is the wrong way to go.

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Tornado Help, Floods, Town Halls & Railways

MAY 26TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

Tornado Help, Floods, Town Halls & Railways

How to Help Joplin

As too many Southeast Missouri families already know, natural disasters can destroy our communities quickly leaving us in the wake of a horrible aftermath. As we begin rebuilding from severe flooding across our region, families in Joplin and Southwest Missouri are searching for survivors. They are also coming to terms with the more than 100 lost lives and quarter of homes and businesses taken by an F5, mile-wide tornado that struck their town Sunday.

As we worked to take care of our own, we were also blessed with an outpouring of help from people from across the state. Now, it's our turn to help those in need in Joplin. Currently, organizations and first responders are providing emergency relief, food and shelter. But there are ways you can help, too.

State Resources

The Missouri State Emergency Management Agency is providing details on **donating** to help Missourians recover and rebuild, or you can call 800-427-4626 to find out how you can donate products or services. Health professionals interested in volunteering are asked to sign up on the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services **Show-Me Response website**.

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross has opened a shelter in Joplin at Missouri Southern State University, and the Red Cross is working to provide transportation to the shelter for those in need. The Red Cross is also distributing food, cleanup supplies and comfort kits, and sending health workers to provide immediate care. Text "REDCROSS" to 90999 to make a \$10 donation, or visit the **website** to donate, give blood or volunteer.

The United Way

Dial 211 or visit 211missouri.org for additional information about volunteering or donating to Joplin efforts.

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army has mobilized four feeding kitchens in impacted areas of Joplin. The Salvation Army's disaster-relief efforts in Joplin can be supported by texting "JOPLIN" to 80888 to make a \$10 donation. You can also donate through their [website](#) or by calling 1-800-SAL-ARMY.

Greenville Meeting

This Thursday, the Corp of Engineers and the Missouri Department of Transportation are holding an informational meeting from 6-8 p.m. at the Greenville High School multipurpose building in Greenville, MO. Personnel from the Corp of Engineers Wappapello Lake Project Office, St. Louis District Office and MoDOT will give a formal presentation and then be available to answer questions and hear your input on issues including reopening the camp grounds, special events and the repair of State Route T.

As our communities begin to recover and rebuild from, in many cases, record flooding we need to look at ways we can better prepare for future floods. Greenville and Wayne County hope to establish an emergency road, a permanent dam and a permanent pumping station. I plan to be at the Thursday night's meeting and support ways we can learn from our most recent disasters to better prevent the damage future floods may cause.

Town Hall Follow Up

I also want to thank everyone who joined me over the last two weeks at one of my town hall meetings at nine different stops across the district. It is always a pleasure to speak with you directly about my priorities at the capitol and how you believe I can better serve you in Jefferson City.

Rail History on Local Tracks

As we move into summer, a piece of rail history is moving through our region. Union Pacific's legendary steam locomotive, No. 844, will soon be rumbling down the train tracks towards several of our communities. Earlier this year, Union Pacific Railroad held

the "Great Excursion Adventure - You Route the Steam" contest using social media votes to determine what route No. 844 would take this summer. Thanks to many of your votes, the Little Rock Express edged the Tuscola Turn by 3,042 votes to win.

No. 844 will begin its route along the Little Rock Express May 29 in Kansas City, MO, concluding June 9, in North Little Rock, AR. Steam Engine No. 844 is scheduled to make three stops in Southeast Missouri. The first is a full day in Cape Girardeau followed by two Whistle Stops in Dexter and Poplar Bluff, respectively. Local stop details are below, check out the entire route's **Detailed Schedule** here.

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I will continue to keep you apprised of issues important to the people of the 25th Senatorial District and all Missourians. Please feel free to contact me throughout the year with any comments or questions using the information listed below and on my website at www.senate.mo.gov/mayer.

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Legislative Session Scorecard

MAY 16TH 2011 BY NEWS

Legislative Session Scorecard

By Rob Mayer As the 2011 Legislative Session came to a close Friday evening, it was clear we advanced a number of key. This was possible because senators worked together to find common sense solutions to the problems that face the people of Missouri.

We began this session with two goals – passing a balanced budget Missouri taxpayers could sustain without a tax increase and putting people back to work. The Senate worked together to pass a balanced budget on-time that protects taxpayers, passed several job creation initiatives, restored funding for K-12 busing and higher education, and crafted a new congressional district map that is fair and equitable.

As the final gavel fell, lawmakers had sent three bills to the governor aimed at assisting businesses in their ability to hire more employees.

The first, Senate Bill 19, has already been signed by the governor. The new law first freezes and then phases out Missouri's corporate franchise tax over a five-year period. The bill takes effect Aug. 28. By phasing out this double taxation on employers, we eliminate a disincentive that penalized companies for investing more in our state. I was glad the governor joined us in our effort to allow companies to invest in hiring new employees instead of growing government through higher taxes.

Last month, we also passed and the governor signed into law a bill that extended unemployment benefits for more than 10,000 Missouri families who had reached, and those nearing, the 79-week cut-off. House Bill 163 also included a reduction to Missouri's share of initial unemployment benefits from 26 weeks to 20 weeks. The federal government has spent Missouri businesses into an almost \$1 billion debt when it comes to unemployment benefits. With this change, we reduced the future burden on businesses to offset the additional federal taxes that will be placed on Missouri businesses to pay off that debt. But more importantly, this will encourage businesses to hire and expand, creating new jobs.

Our third measure, Senate Bill 188, was unfortunately vetoed by the governor. The bill would change state laws to mirror federal employment laws when it comes to discrimination. We want Missouri employees to be protected from employers who break the law. The best way to do this is by having our inharmonious state laws changed to mirror the provisions set out in the historic Civil Rights Act. The bill would give employers and employees certainty across the board when it comes to their day in court. We will most likely move to override the governor's veto in the annual veto session held in September.

As I noted last week, we also advanced 13 budget bills totaling \$23.2 billion for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

Other bills to advance this session include:

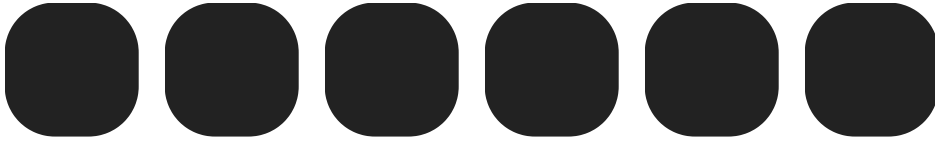
- A ballot question and enabling legislation to let voters decide if Missourians should be required to show photo identification at the polls (SJR2 and SB3);
[li]"The Missouri Solution" representing a compromise to last year's Prop B requirements for Missouri dog breeders. The governor signed both SB113 & 95 and HB161 last month. Lawmakers passed and the governor signed SB187 ending nuisance lawsuit abuses against Missouri farm families.
- Two identical bills, HB213 and SB65 (that I sponsored), would prevent late-term abortions.
- HB641 outlaws "bath salts," a synthetic drug that mimics the effects of cocaine, and other controlled substances know as K3 that mimic marijuana.
- HB73 requires drug testing for TANF recipients, with those testing positive to complete a drug treatment program and not test positive again in order to regain their benefits.
- And HB412 extends the sunset on the Missouri Prescription Drug Program that assists more than 225,000 Missouri low-income seniors and the disabled in purchasing drugs under the Medicare Part D program. Full funding, or \$19.6 million, was included in the budget.

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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Floods, Redistricting, “Solution” & Incentives

MAY 02ND 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

Floods, Redistricting, “Solution” & Incentives

As severe storms, tornadoes, and massive flooding blanketed parts of the southeast Missouri, many of our families and neighbors have been devastated. Our communities have gone above and beyond to help their friends and neighbors in need during this difficult and unpredictable time. Area residents of Poplar Bluff and now farmers across the Bootheel have been evacuated from their homes to emergency shelters.

Local and national agencies, including the State Highway Patrol, State Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross, are working to help Missourians affected by flooding. Plus, approximately 200 National Guard members are on the ground to assist in continued evacuation and patrol of evacuated areas. I praise the members of these agencies and others who have been working with local officials to help Missourians with the most basic necessities — food, clean water, shelter, and clothing — which we often take for granted. As I toured these areas and keep mindful watch on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ decision of whether or not to breach Missouri River levies, I pray families receive the help they need and find the strength to recover from this recent string of storms and flooding.

If you need assistance, or want to help those in need, please contact the **Southeast Missouri Chapter of the American Red Cross** at (573) 335-9471.

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We also completed our constitutional duty and crafted a map that is fair and equitable to Missouri citizens when it comes to their representation in the U.S. Congress. Last Wednesday we gave final approval to the Conference Committee Report for House Bill 193. The new map of congressional districts is based on data from the most recent census. While Missouri's population grew 7 percent, other states grew at faster rates, meaning Missouri is losing a congressional seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, resulting in a drop from nine to eight seats.

The map we adopted reflects the best interests of all Missourians. We crafted a map that both Republicans and Democrats voted yes for because it appropriately and fairly represents Missouri's citizens. Unfortunately, the governor vetoed the map this weekend. But we expect an attempt to override his veto of a map that has bipartisan support.

An update to last week's efforts by the animal agriculture community is that we heard and passed Senate Bill 161. The bill is often referred to as the "Missouri Solution" to the debate on laws regulating the dog breeding industry in our state. Following its passage in the House and Senate, the governor quickly signed the measure into law thereby codifying new laws going after unlicensed breeders and putting in place common sense regulations for licensed dog breeders to follow when caring for their animals.

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In the Senate, we also gave initial approval to House Bill 116. The measure would overhaul the state's tax incentive programs for an estimated \$1.5 billion in taxpayer savings over the next 15 years. The bill also includes new business tax incentives, such as "Compete Missouri" and encourages foreign trade in Missouri by establishing the "Aerotropolis Trade Incentive and Tax Credit Act." That particular tax credit is designed to turn Lambert - St. Louis International Airport into an international trade hub with exports and imports moving through our state. This trade hub would open up many new markets for Missouri's agricultural producers. In addition, the bill also includes a proposal authorizing a new state fund offering incentives to invest in science and technology research and companies throughout Missouri.

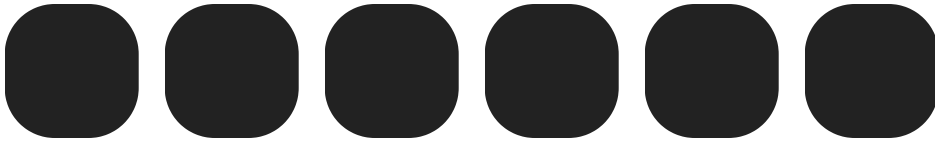
I will continue to keep you apprised of issues important to the people of the 25th Senatorial District and all Missourians. Please feel free to contact me throughout the year with any comments or questions using the information listed below and on my website at

www.senate.mo.gov/mayer.

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Busy Week In State Senate

APRIL 22ND 2011 BY NEWS

[Busy Week In State Senate](#)

By Rob Mayer

This week in the Missouri Senate we tackled the state operating budget, efforts to protect animal agriculture and criminal code revisions to domestic violence laws.

The Missouri Senate this week amended and passed 13 budget bills totaling \$23.2 billion that make up the state operating budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The approved funding will run the critical functions of state government without a tax increase and include a \$6 million net reduction in spending from the budget proposed by the governor in January. Our budget also prioritized education with \$20 million increases for K-12

busing and Missouri's two and four-year colleges and universities.

By lessening the governor's 7 percent cut to only 4.8 percent, we allow our colleges and universities to find and pass on real savings to out-of-pocket expenses students would have incurred. And by shoring up funding for K-12 transportation, we help prevent local schools from having to raid funding for our classrooms or other dollars directed to education. The Senate also voted to maintain K-12 school funding at its current level for the coming budget year and we voted to accept an additional \$189 million in federal funding to go toward that effort.

I commend our Appropriations chairman and the Senate for continuing our commitment to education. This budget protects our students in our K-12 classrooms and goes further by finding even more funding — where the governor could not — for school transportation and our students attending Missouri's community colleges and universities.

Differences in the House and Senate versions of the budget bills will now be ironed out by lawmakers in conference committees. Negotiated versions must return to the House before gaining Senate approval to advance to the governor. The budget must pass by 6 p.m., Friday, May 6, as required by the constitution.

Support For Animal Agriculture

We also saw hundreds — if not a thousand — Missourians turn out from across the state at the Capitol Wednesday to show their support for animal agriculture. The governor's signature is all that stands in the way of reforming Missouri's dog breeding industry while protecting it as a viable profession for Missourians. More than 65 lawmakers, 10 agriculture community representatives, and all those that turned out Wednesday are calling on the governor to sign Senate Bill 113 & 95 into law.

This bill still represents the best hope to repair the damage Proposition B would do to the dog breeding industry and Missouri agriculture. The governor has proposed a new compromise, but his signature on Senate Bill 113 & 95 is paramount in developing goodwill with lawmakers for us to advance his compromise language so late in the legislative session. It was great to see so many come out and support agriculture as a way of life in our great state. I hope the governor takes the immense turnout in support of animal agriculture to heart as he makes his decision.

Strengthening Domestic Violence Laws

We also voted unanimously to approve legislation that would strengthen domestic violence laws throughout the state of Missouri. Senate Bill 320 would provide consistency by updating definitions, improving protections available to victims and increasing the accountability for offenders.

The goal of this legislation is to make Missouri a safer place to live by providing a more meaningful order of protection process for women, children and all victims of domestic violence. In order to make Missouri's domestic violence laws the most effective, we need to provide courts and law enforcement officers with clear, consistent definitions. The legislation does that and is based on recommendations made by a special Domestic Violence Task Force that met last year to suggest and analyze improvements to law enforcement procedures and the courts system.

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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