

The Mayer Report



TOP

Helping Missouri Businesses Invest In Jobs

JUNE 16TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Helping Missouri Businesses Invest In Jobs

By Rob Mayer

Figures released last week by the U.S. Department of Commerce indicated that Missouri's economy over the last year has been stuck in neutral with barely any growth. Lagging behind the national average is unacceptable and is why we have fought to grow Missouri's economy by enacting policies that will put Missourians back to work in good-paying jobs. This past session we sent a number of bills to the governor to do just that, ending the failed policies of the past while removing the barriers which are preventing businesses from investing in new jobs.

An October 2011 Gallup poll showed small-business owners ranked compliance with government regulations as the most important problem facing them today. Few things can bring private sector growth to a halt more quickly than overly contrived red tape. This is why we worked hard to pass [Senate Bill 469](#). If signed by the governor, it would require state agencies to review and reconsider regulations on a regular basis to increase agency accountability and improve legislative oversight. Each state regulation must be reviewed regularly to determine whether it is outdated, duplicative, conflicts with other rules, is burdensome or narrowly tailored; agencies must then make necessary changes while still providing adequate protection to the public.

As another part of our goal of improving Missouri's business climate, we also quickly passed a bill making changes to Missouri's workers' compensation laws. [Senate Bill 572](#) would have prevented co-employees from suing each other for unintentional work place accidents as well as make important changes regarding occupational diseases. The governor, however, disagreed with us and vetoed the bill. We did not give up though. The General Assembly knew failure to address co-employees liability was costing employers who had to maintain separate insurance for these lawsuits, money they could not invest in hiring new employees. Based on his veto message, the Senate amended [House Bill 1540](#) to send a second version of workers' compensation reforms to the governor for his signature.

Unfortunately, a third key fix we acted swiftly on to help businesses invest in jobs was also vetoed by the governor. The veto of [House Bill 1219](#), which would have matched Missouri's Employment Laws with that of the federal government's, means employers are still burdened with expansive legal fees to navigate a current system riddled with uncertainty. We worked to remove the uncertainty so businesses could spend their money on employees and not lawsuits, but the veto prevented this change.

The General Assembly's actions this past session were crucial in removing the burdensome regulations and barriers, making Missouri less competitive and with stifled job growth. Even with the small improvement in unemployment, there are far too many Missouri employees out of work, and that is why it was important we put these policies in place so Missourian can go back to work. I look forward to celebrating with workers across the state when the governor signs both HB 1540 and SB 469 in to law.

Please feel free to contact me with your comments, questions, or issues on my website at www.senate.mo.gov/mayer.

Rob Mayer of Dexter represents the 25th Senatorial District in the Missouri State Senate and is the Senate President Pro Tem.

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