

Letters To The Editor



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Letter to the Editor by Senator Doug Libla

APRIL 23RD 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Letter to the Editor by Senator Doug Libla

April 22, 2015

Letter to the Editor by Senator Doug Libla
Chairman, Senate Transportation Committee

Our state is facing two critical transportation issues:

- Missouri has thousands of bridges over 50 years old; 1,600 of them are over 75 years old! Approximately 6,300 of our bridges are obsolete and structurally deficient.
- In 2017, Missouri will no longer generate enough highway user revenue to access federal construction dollars that would otherwise be available to us.

This is why I sponsored Senate Bill 540. During public testimony on the bill heard April 1, 2015, by the Transportation, Infrastructure & Public Safety Committee, of which I am the chairman, there were 24 individuals and groups in support – and ZERO in opposition. On April 8th, SB 540 was unanimously voted out of committee.

On April 14th, I presented SB 540 to the full senate. The bill called for a two-cent increase in the state's fuel tax beginning January 1, 2016. The last increase was in 1992 and gradually phased in to the current level of 17 cents per gallon. This rate has remained the same for the last 20 years, while concrete, steel, labor, and other costs have increased dramatically. In 2015 dollars, 17 cents is now worth about eight cents in spending power. Counties and cities receive approximately 30 percent of this eight-cent value. That means the state's share is only 5.4 cents per gallon in terms of 2015 spending power.

The deteriorating condition of our roads and bridges should be a personal safety and economic concern to all Missourians. Our bridges are at risk of failing at any time. Just last week in Kansas City a bridge built in 1967 carrying thousands of vehicles per day at the I-70/I-35 interchange had to be closed for an undetermined amount of time for structural repairs. From an economic development standpoint, what company would want to locate or expand in Missouri? They need reasonable assurance/expectation that our roads and bridges will be maintained and improved to meet their freight and distribution needs both now and in the future.

As if safety and economic worries weren't enough, our state faces a dwindling ability to use federal highway construction dollars. Missouri is allocated about \$870 million per year of federal highway funds, but to get them, we have to be able to provide matching state funds. For every \$4 of federal funds, we need to provide \$1. If we can't, Missouri will be unable to claim the federal dollars.

Beginning in 2017, Missouri will no longer be able to match all of our federal construction dollars. Our federal fuel tax money will flow only in one direction – toward Washington. We need to get this money back or it will be gone forever!

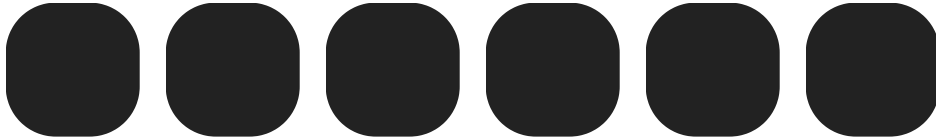
Since 1924 Missouri has funded its investment in highways through a fuel tax. This is still the best, most reliable and fairest form of highway maintenance revenue because highway users pay it. Approximately 50 percent of the fuel purchased in Missouri is bought by non-residents traveling through the state.

Unfortunately, SB 540 was ultimately filibustered by two senators the same day it was brought up for debate and action.

We need a transportation policy now or we can put our heads “back in the sand” expecting the problem to solve itself – a policy that has been followed for the past 20 years. When the inevitable bridge closures occur, and highways continue deteriorating, what excuse will be acceptable to the citizens of this state?

We cannot say “I didn't know.” The people will know that we simply failed in our duty.

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Important AmerenUE Incentive Program

MARCH 27TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Important AmerenUE Incentive Program](#)

FROM THE DEXTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
JANET COLEMAN

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT AN AMEREN INCENTIVE PROGRAM. WE HAVE UPDATED THE LIGHTS IN OUR BUILDING AND HAVE QUALIFIED FOR THE INCENTIVE. WE ANTICIPATE CONSIDERABLE SAVINGS IN OUR FUTURE ELECTRICAL BILLS. PLEASE TAKE TIME TO READ THE EMAIL I RECEIVED TODAY.

Hi Janet,

It sure seems like there are a lot of businesses in Dexter that still have the inefficient T-12 lighting! I met with some businesses yesterday that evaluated this and immediately sent in applications applying for incentives.

Below is a flyer that you can feel free to forward to your members regarding the increased T-12 lighting replacement incentives. Please remember to mention that the 6 month window coming to a close very soon (as of today there is only 21 days left)! The deadline is April 15th to have projects totally installed with all paperwork submitted.

It is definitely worth your members taking advantage of as the INCREASED T-12 replacement incentives are significant! On T-8 or LED projects replacing T-12s, the incentive after April 15th could drop as much as \$5,000 - \$8,000 per 300 fixtures. We are seeing some applications with simple paybacks (after incentive) as quick as 10 months. I don't think we have seen any applications come in with paybacks longer than 2-1/2 years!

Laura with Powell Supply in Dexter has been helping a lot of the Dexter businesses take advantage of this. Because time is of the essence, I can give Dexter businesses a quick ok to get started after an application is submitted. If any customers would like assistance, I would be more than happy to assist. Thank you.

Best regards,

Lincoln R. Boschert
Ameren Missouri's ActOnEnergy BizSavers® program
314.239.8172 cell

PS. All other incentives (high bay lighting, VFDs, compressed air, etc.) will remain intact through the end of the program cycle ending November 30, 2015.

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Letter from Tila Hubrecht

MARCH 14TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Letter from Tila Hubrecht

Dear 151st District Constituents,

The beautiful weather has arrived! This week we all enjoyed seeing the snow melt and the temperatures rise with the sun showing it's beautiful face! The time change, something that we all complain about, has taken place. There is a bill that has been introduced regarding the time change. I have signed as a co-sponsor of this piece of legislation but have received reports from constituents telling me of a time when this was tried unsuccessfully in the past. I am not aware of this attempt but if you are, would you please share with me your thoughts on this? We all have different experiences and expertise and you sharing yours with me will enable me to vote wisely on this issue as well as all bills that are presented on the floor.

This week the budget was finished in the House and sent to the Senate. I am listing more information below on this but all in all, the budget so far looks like something we can all work with, there were quite a few areas that were increased above the Governor's recommendations. I will monitor how the budget progresses through the Senate and what changes are made.

Beautiful pieces of artwork were created by some very talented students at Puxico Elementary and have been on display in the Capitol this past week. One piece was actually presented to me to be displayed in my office for this next year, I am very

honored! I am quite impressed with the talent of these young students! I enjoyed meeting with these students and their families as they were at the Capitol Thursday.

The Floor and Committees are all quite busy and will continue to be busy as the session quickly progresses. I am kept quite busy reading through several bills each evening after things "close" for the day! I have filed several pieces of legislation this session and am very busy working to get these bills through the process. I will have hearings on two of these bills this next week. I will spend quite a bit of time this weekend while I am home preparing my presentation for the committee. These two pieces of legislation, if successful, will reduce some government regulations on nursing home facilities that are duplicative and overburdensome. Government should work for the people, not the people working for the government!

Legislative Spring Break is approaching, it will be the week of March 23rd. If you have any event that you would like for me to attend during that week, please call my office as soon as you can, my schedule for the break is quickly filling up! I am hoping to be able to make it through much of the district that week meeting as many constituents as possible.

Until next week,
Tila

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City Administrator Warns of Flooding in Dexter

FEBRUARY 20TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

City Administrator Warns of Flooding in Dexter

Dexter, Missouri - The National Weather Service is estimating quite a bit of rain for Saturday, February 21st, that coupled with the large amount of snowfall we have already on the ground could cause major flooding in Dexter.

Due to large amounts of snow in the ditches and driveway culverts the drainage is being blocked. When the snow begins to melt and it rains several inches the liquid has to get to the ditches in front of homes.

If the melted snow and rain cannot flow freely then it will back up into homes and yards causing flooding and damage.

Please take some time today to open the driveway drain in front of your home. The City of Dexter spent numerous hours on Thursday and will continue to try and free up large drains blocked by the snow.

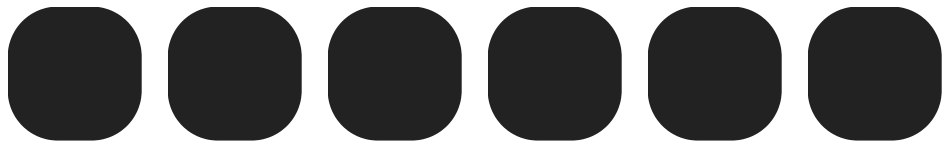
Thank you,
Mark Stidham
City Administrator, Dexter

This could be recommended for anyone even in the county, if you have culverts or drainage, they need to be cleared or flooding may occur.

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Casting Crowns to Appear at The Carson Center

FEBRUARY 05TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Casting Crowns to Appear at The Carson Center

Paducah, Kentucky – Casting Crowns will appear at The Carson Center in Paducah, Kentucky on February 28th.

Taken from their website here is more information about this awesome Christian band. For Ticket information click **HERE!**

“Hearing Casting Crowns’ frontman Mark Hall singing those words in the title track of the band’s new album **Thrive**, it’s hard not to feel peace wash over your soul. Life can be so challenging and it’s easy to become overwhelmed. What a gift to be reminded we were made to thrive!

“The idea of ‘Thrive’ came out of our student ministry. I’ve been a youth pastor for almost 22 years and it’s still what I want to be when I grow up,” Hall says with a grin. “The songs always really start out with what we’re teaching, and for years I’ve been using Psalm 1 in showing them what a believer looks like. It says: ‘Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields

its fruit in season.’”

For Hall, nature seemed to underscore scripture on a family vacation in Gatlinburg, Tenn. when he looked at the trees near the river. “Their roots are exposed and you can feel them just doing everything they can to get to where the water is,” he says. “When I talk to families about how they are doing, they always say ‘just surviving.’ That is not the life that God designed for us to live. That’s not saying that you’re not going to have problems. None of the New Testament people had it easy. They all had troubles, some even at the expense of their lives. The book of joy, Philippians, was written from prison. Hard times are going to come, but God didn’t put you here just so you could survive through hard times. He put you here to thrive, to dig in and to reach out. This record is an effort to draw a picture of what a believer, a follower of Jesus, would look like if they dug into their roots and understood God and themselves more, and then instead of trying to go be Christian for God, they just let God give them chances to be a Christian.”

Casting Crowns’ has consistently delivered songs that spur listeners to evaluate their relationship with God and with each other. “The basic idea is let God define himself through you and if you’ll do that, you’re going to thrive,” says Hall. “The first six songs on the record are all about learning who God is and who you are. The second six songs are about how that works out. How are you going to get out there and let him live his life through you?”

The album’s lead single “All You’ve Ever Wanted” has a potent message. “It’s combating that logic that we have in us that says when we fail, we need to make it right,” Hall says. “We think we need to make things right with God. We think we’ve got to make him proud again. Not only does it not work, it’s not needed. We’re fighting a battle that’s already won and that’s what this song is about.”

Hall says the hardest song for him to write on the new album was “Love You With the Truth.” “It’s a big, upbeat rockin’ song about a person realizing that they’ve been a really cruddy friend because they haven’t shared the truth with the person closest to them,” Hall explains. “People say, ‘I want to share the gospel, but I don’t want to ruin my friendship.’ What you are really saying is I love my friendship more than I love my friend. It’s tough, but it’s truth.”

One of the most poignant songs on the album is the compelling ballad “Broken Together.” “Marriage is tough,” Hall says. “We bring a lot of fairytales to the picture when it comes to marriage. We bring them to the altar with us [thinking]: ‘This is going to be perfect. We don’t have to be apart. We can just wake up together every morning and no one is

going to have morning breath. We're not going to have any problems.' And then the problems hit and you don't know where to file those into your picture. . . The idea I'm trying to say is: 'Can you lay down who you thought I was and love the me that is? Can we take this from where we are now and realize that I can't be that person?' Only God is going to be able to make this work and broken people can be broken together. To me, it's probably the most important song on the record."

Song after song on the album deals with tough topics and frames life's challenging moments in Biblical perspective. "House of Their Dreams" paints a portrait of a family who has achieved what the world views as success, but inside their home, they are aching with emptiness and isolation. "Just Be Held" shares an uplifting message for anyone struggling as Hall shares what our heavenly father wants his children to remember: "Your world's not falling apart, it's falling into place. I'm on the throne. Stop holding on and just be held."

"Waiting on the Night to Fall" is a powerful ballad that displays the depth and range in Hall's voice. The haunting lyric about addiction uses the metaphor of an old man lurking in the woods, biding his time, as Hall sings: "He knows you have the answers, but truth lies dusty on your shelf and the sword that you could slay him with has become an ornament and nothing else."

"Dream for You" features Hall's youth group singing background vocals. The song reminds us God's dream for us is bigger than we could ever imagine. "We have this picture of who God can use," Hall says, noting that when God spoke to Moses, he found reasons he couldn't do what God asked. "What God had to do for Moses is He had to wipe away that picture and say, 'I'm going to use you.' It's the same way with us. When God hits us with something like 'You need to teach this small group' or 'you need to live on a mission field,' we immediately look in our own backpack at our gifts and skills. If I would have lived on that, I would have never been a youth pastor. I would have never written a song. I would have never stood up in front of anybody. I don't have any of those things in my backpack. . . God is saying, 'There's an X-factor here. If you would just step up, I'll do something that will blow your mind.'"

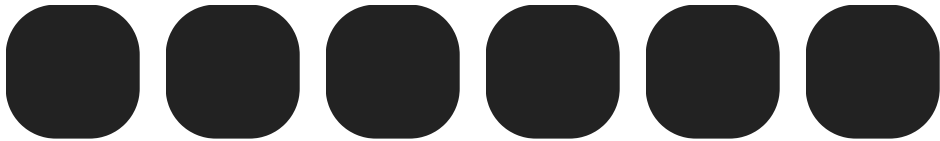
Working again with producer Mark Miller, who signed the band to his label more than a decade ago, **Casting Crowns** has crafted another collection of songs that are entertaining and innovative, yet lyrically substantive. *Thrive* is a rich aural feast that leaves everyone with plenty of food for thought. In writing songs for *Thrive*, Hall enlisted some of his favorite collaborators, among them Matthew West, Matt Maher and Bernie Herms.

It's been more than 10 years since the members of **Casting Crowns** heard their first single on the radio in July 2003, the same day Hall and his wife Melanie welcomed their daughter Zoe. Since then so much has happened in the lives of each member and along the way God has taught them so much. "He's opened our eyes to our suspicion that He was way bigger than we thought He was," Hall says with a smile. "He didn't need **Casting Crowns** to come along to help His word get out. God is winning. He's changing the world. It may look at times like things are getting darker and darker, but they are not. Everywhere you go, you can see light and light wins. It always wins."

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