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Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, April 8, 2016

APRIL 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, April 8, 2016

Hello! We are definitely in the last half of the session. Things are hopping here and everyone is very busy. One of the tools used during the last half of session is to attach legislation to other legislation in the form of amendments. I have begun using this tool with mixed success so far. There were so many bills filed this year that it is impossible for every bill to receive a hearing in committee, in fact, a number of bills have yet to be referred to committee due to the high volume of legislation filed.

I will give a brief update of my filed legislation in the following lines:

My HB 1366 has progressed and is now known as SCS HCS HB 1366 and 1878. All of this is actually Senate Committee Substitute for House Committee Substitute for House Bills 1366 and 1878—quite a mouth full!! This bill has been voted out of committee in the Senate and is on its way to the Senate floor!! I am quite excited about this progress! This bill will be so good for Missouri and Missourians. There has been absolutely no opposition from any group during this entire process; it is really amazing what happens when everyone works together! The bill has a positive fiscal note which means it will save the state money as well as individual Missourians. I am hopeful that either this bill or the Senate companion which is SB 875 will make it across the finish line this year and be signed into law. We really need the money saving benefits of this legislation.

HB 1368—legislation proposing a committee to study the regulations the Schools for the Severely Disabled must operate under and then to make recommendations to the General Assembly as well as to our Federal Delegation in Washington DC on how to assist

Schools for the Severely Disabled to operate more freely and allow them to really focus on the children's special needs. This legislation received a hearing in the first level of committee this week and will hopefully be voted to the second level of committee next week.

HCS HB 1866—legislation related to Advanced Practice Registered Nurses was placed on the House Floor Calendar for Perfection. I am looking forward to the debate on the floor for this legislation. I am hoping to receive enough votes to send this legislation to the Senate. We have a health care provider shortage in Missouri and this will allow us to take steps towards meeting the health care needs of Missouri.

HB 2546—legislation which will require the Dyslexia Specialist hired by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to begin disseminating information regarding dyslexia to our educators at no charge to the schools or educators. This bill was heard in committee this week and will be hopefully voted to the second level of committee next week.

I am preparing for another meeting with the Department of Health and Senior Services to continue the work being done to update the Certified Nursing Assistant Training Program. CNAs are used greatly in long term care facilities as well as in all health care situations. I want to ensure the CNAs receive the very best training we can give them to prepare them to provide the very best care to our citizens. I will keep you posted as to the outcome of this next meeting. We haven't scheduled a date yet for the meeting, we are both waiting for information to arrive we need for our next discussion.

I am staying in Jefferson City an extra day this week to attend a State Interagency Coordinating Council Meeting. But I will head for home at the conclusion of the meeting!! SICCC works to coordinate Early Childhood Outreach and Education Efforts in our state for children with developmental delays and disabilities. I am anxious to attend this meeting and learn more about SICCC and the needs in Missouri.

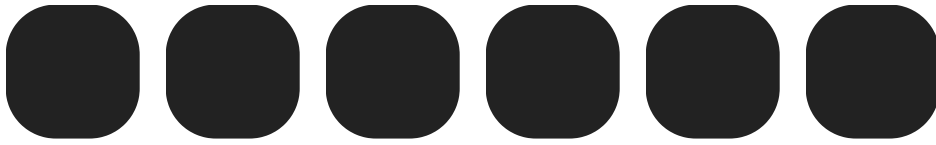
Until Next Week!!

Tila

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Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, April 8, 2016

APRIL 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jason Smith's Capitol Report - Friday, April 8, 2016

“On the Road Again...” April 8th, 2016

To be successful in your job, it is important to set goals for yourself. For me, those goals are best set by interacting with and listening to the needs, obstacles and struggles of the folks in south central and southeast Missouri. District work periods provide me with that unique opportunity to be home for an extended period time and visit with the businesses, farmers and families I am honored to represent.

46 different events, stops in all 30 counties of Missouri’s 8th Congressional district and over 3,100 miles traveled is how I have spent my past two weeks – to put in perspective that is further than driving from Washington, D.C. to Los Angeles. The best way to be an effective representative is through hearing first-hand accounts and stories from residents, community leaders, and small business owners of the different struggles they are facing. This is why I held 8 town-hall meet and greets over the last 2 weeks, hosted 2 - first of their kind Veterans Benefits’ Summits, spoke to numerous local leaders, and visited close

to 10 schools.

At one event in Doniphan the line of people wrapped around the block. The community meeting we held there was a great opportunity for me to hear directly from residents about the different issues they are confronting daily and what they care most about. I will carry the messages from that meetings back to the bureaucrats in Washington who have never set foot in south central or southeast Missouri. Turnout like that is exactly why these district work weeks have become some of my favorite opportunities to engage with folks and revisit some of my favorite places.

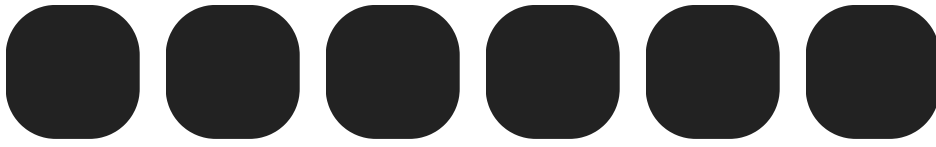
The two Veterans Benefits Summits we hosted were among some of the most rewarding events of the past couple weeks. There are roughly 60,000 veterans in south central and southeast Missouri and assisting those veterans in navigating an often cumbersome and confusing federal process accounts for roughly half of all the casework assistance my office provides each year. These two Summits, hosted in Cape Girardeau and Kennett, were the first of their kind in our district. These Summits were aimed at providing better access and better assistance to the veterans in our area for a variety of issues – making sure our nation’s veterans are taken care of is a very important priority to me and many of the folks in district. The Summits provided a great opportunity for veterans and their families to come to a single location and make contact with all of the federal, state and local agencies and services available to them.

As a 7th generation Missourian, I have a deep passion for serving the folks in the same communities that I grew up. These past two weeks have been a great opportunity to spend time with friends, families and community leaders back home. It will be a difficult plane ride to Washington next week, however seeing so many of the great people in our district over this work period gives me renewed energy to keep fighting for the values, morals and way of life that so many of us enjoy.

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From Tila Hubrecht - Legislative Update Related to Noranda Aluminum

APRIL 11TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

From Tila Hubrecht - Legislative Update Related to Noranda Aluminum

New Madrid, Missouri - This week I had the opportunity to support Southeast Missouri by helping pass House Bill 2689 out of the House of Representatives. HB 2689 would enable the Noranda aluminum smelter to receive a sustainable power rate. It is a critical step to restarting the smelter's pot lines and getting people back to work. Without a competitive and sustainable power rate it is very unlikely the smelter will ever produce another pound of aluminum.

House Bill 2689 now moves on to the Senate and is my hope it will pass this legislation as soon as possible. There are only five weeks remaining in this legislative session and time cannot be wasted. The jobs at the smelter are too important for our region and this opportunity cannot be missed.

Information for Displaced Workers:

Missouri Job Center Programs and Services:

The Missouri Job Centers provide the following programs and services to Dislocated Workers:

- Assessment services to identify your skills, interests and other traits to help guide you to a new career
- Earn a National Career Readiness Certificate, a portable credential measuring workplace skills
- Career counseling services to help you explore potential careers, utilize labor market information and identify open jobs that meet your skill sets
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan to assist you in reaching your employment goals
- Job preparation workshops to assist with resume writing, interviewing skills and effective job searching
- Workshops on financial management and starting a small business
- Training and education services that allow you to earn a certificate or work toward a degree
- Work Based Learning programs to either gain valuable work experience or train On-the-Job
- Utilize Job Center equipment to conduct a self directed job search

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Supportive Services may be available to Noranda workers, living out of state, on a limited basis to allow for participation in Career, Individualized or Training services (career counseling, workshops, assessments, or training). Supportive services are not available to individuals participating in self directed services. Eligibility for WIOA Supportive Services is determined on a case by case basis and based on actual need. Allowable Supportive Services include:

- Transportation (mileage reimbursement, car repairs, car payment);
- Child or dependent care;
- Housing (rent, utilities); and

- Tools, uniforms, boots/shoes, clothing or books necessary for training or work.

Eligibility Guidelines for WIOA Supportive Services require:

- Participation in a WIOA Career, Individualized or Training Service;
- Inability to obtain services through any other source, such as faith based organizations, non-profit organizations, government assistance programs, etc; and
- Be able to show how the Supportive Service is necessary to participate in WIOA Individualized or Training services.

Trade Act Program:

The Noranda closure has been certified as a Trade Act eligible event. Trade Act offers the following benefits:

- Training Assistance
 - o Provides up to 130 weeks of full or part time training based on need and Labor Market Information (LMI); or
 - o Up to 130 weeks of Registered Apprenticeship; or
 - o Up to 104 weeks of On-the-Job training based on need and Labor Market Information (LMI).
- Trade Reemployment Allowance (TRA)
 - o Provides benefit similar to Unemployment Insurance (UI) for workers who meet specific criteria. When combined with UI, a worker may receive up to 130 weeks of benefits. Filing deadlines apply.
- Job Search Allowance
 - o Provides a 90% reimbursement of expenses incurred to participate in approved job search activities that are outside the worker's commuting area (commuting area is defined, in Missouri, as 25 miles one-way).
- Relocation Allowance
 - o Provides a 90% reimbursement of moving expenses when suitable employment is obtained outside of the worker's commuting area. Suitable employment is a job that pays at least 80% of the wage rate of the previously held position and is full-time, permanent.
 - o Provides a lump up to \$1,250 for other expenses (deposit on utilities, apartment, etc.)

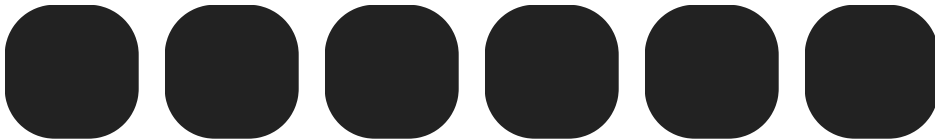
- Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA)
 - o Provides a wage subsidy for workers who are 50 years old or older that pays half the difference in wage between the previously held job and new employment. Maximum benefit is two years or \$10,000.

- Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC)
 - o Provides a 72.5% tax credit for health insurance premiums. This program is administered by the IRS (www.irs.com) and they define which insurance plans are allowable.
 - § To be potentially eligible under the Trade Act program, the worker has to be receiving Unemployment Insurance (and be eligible for TRA), TRA, or RTAA.
 - § HCTC is on a month to month basis depending on if a UI, TRA, or RTAA payment was drawn.

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Veterans' Benefits Summit to be Held in Kennett

APRIL 05TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Veterans' Benefits Summit to be Held in Kennett

Kennett, Missouri - Congressman Jason Smith (MO-08) and his regional staff will be coordinating and hosting a second Veterans' Benefits Summit on April 6, 2016 in Kennett, M.O. The summit will provide veterans an opportunity to come to a single location and make contact with a number of federal, state and local departments that handle veterans' affairs to learn about the different resources available to help our nation's veterans.

"We are really excited to be able to hold a second Veterans' Benefits Summit event in Kennett for those who were unable to attend our first event on Saturday in Cape Girardeau. Veteran casework accounts for about half of the entire casework load across our offices, which shows how important this is to us and a large number of people in Southeast Missouri," said Smith. "We have over 60,000 civilian veterans in our congressional district and so many of them are active parts of their communities and we want to do what we can to help them."

The event will take place Wednesday, April 6th, from 2:30pm to 4:00pm at American Legion Post 66 and a number of participating offices have already been confirmed, which include:

- Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office
- Department of Veterans Affairs John J Pershing VA Medical Center
- Missouri Veterans Commission Veterans Service Officers
- Missouri Veterans Commission Cemetery Program-Bloomfield Cemetery
- National Guard/Military Veterans and Family Support
- Social Security Administration
- Small Business Association
- Southeast Missouri Food Bank
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Veterans Service Officer

- Southeast Missouri State University Office of Military and Veterans Services
- Three Rivers College
- Department of Missouri Economic Development Division of Workforce Development
- Manpower

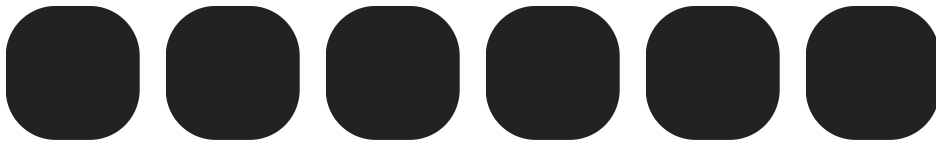
“Some of the most rewarding work we have done is on behalf of the veterans in our community to make sure they know what they are eligible for, help navigate an application, or assist them in finding resources for a successful return to civilian life,” Smith added.

Congressman Smith will kick the event off at 2:30pm with an introduction of the participants as well as be on hand to talk with veterans and try to help answer questions. The address for American Legion Post 66 is 1615 First Street, Kennett, MO 63857. This event is open to everyone.

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Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, April 1, 2016

APRIL 04TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, April 1, 2016

The Missouri House returned this week from the annual Spring Break. To date the House has seen more than 1,500 bills filed with nearly 450 House Bills already receiving committee approval. At this time the House has approved and sent to the Senate more than 150 bills, and so far only one of the bills has received final approval. The number of bills sent to the Senate is a significant increase from last session when the House had approved just more than 90 bills entering the break. This high volume of bills moving through the process means all legislators will have a heavy workload from now until the end of session.

We passed two bills which I feel will have a direct impact on improving health care for all Missourians. I will share a summary of these two bills from the House communications office.

House Approves “Step Therapy” Measure to Improve Access to Vital Medications (HB 2029)

Missourians with chronic illnesses would have better access to the medications they need under legislation approved by the Missouri House this week. The legislation is designed to prevent redundant “step therapy” so that patients who switch health insurance benefits are not forced to try medications that have already proven to be ineffective before being allowed to use medication that works.

The legislation approved by the House simply ensures that a patient will not have to go through the process of trying multiple medications again simply because of an insurance change. In effect, it makes it so the medicine prescribed by the patient’s doctor is the medicine the patient is allowed to take.

The legislation received overwhelming bipartisan support and is now on its way to the Senate for consideration.

Expanding Access to Health Care (HB 1923)

The Missouri House approved legislation this week designed to modernize health care in Missouri, and improve the level of care provided by the state's system of Medicaid. The legislation brings telehealth services in Missouri into state statute and works to bring greater access to health care to Missourians in rural and underserved areas.

The bill would update Missouri's laws on Medicaid reimbursement in regard to telehealth services so that more health care professionals could provide telehealth care to Medicaid recipients. Supporters of the bill say it is an important change that will allow patients to receive care without having to travel long distances. They noted the change could also result in a significant cost savings. In 2015 the state's Medicaid program allocated more than \$40 million for use in providing non-emergency medical transportation to take patients in underserved areas to see specialists.

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