



**REPRESENTATIVE
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DISTRICT 135**

Committees

Chair - Infrastructure and Transportation Funding
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Transportation
Transportation Oversight
Tourism
Local Government



**Capitol Report
for
May 18, 2010**

From the Desk of Charlie Denison

Friday marked the end of the 2010 Legislative Session. After more than four months of work on dozens of important issues, we have delivered on many of the promises that we made in January, including passage of a balanced budget (without tax increases), strong opposition to the federal health care proposals, and an overhaul of our state's ethics laws. While the end of each session is always bitter sweet as some priorities pass and others fail to reach the Governor's desk, I am proud of the work we did despite very challenging times.

At the beginning of the current session, the debate over federal health care was at its peak. Many state legislators, despite an inability to vote on the federal legislation, were overwhelmed with calls, e-mails, letters and comments opposing the federal health care proposals. Our constituents demanded that we do something to stop the federal bills. Unfortunately, in the end, we were unable to stop the legislation. But I am confident that we gave a voice to the millions of Missourians who opposed these proposals. We passed a resolution urging Missouri's Congressional delegation to vote against the bills and when the federal bills ultimately passed, we passed the Health Care Freedom Act, which will give Missouri voters a chance to vote to create statutory protections against government mandating the purchase of health insurance, and prohibit government fines and penalties for refusing to do so.

The major concern of the 2010 session was the budget. Because of dwindling revenues and a weak economy, passage of a balanced budget was difficult. But in the end, we cut nearly 500 million dollars from Governor Nixon's proposed budget which helped ensure a balanced budget, **without raising taxes**. The cuts were not the easy thing to do, but I am confident they were the right thing to do. We have all watched as Congress continues to pass out-of-balanced budgets and we felt that we must do the right thing, not necessarily to popular thing, and make the tough decisions necessary to keep our state's budget balanced.

At the beginning of the 2010 Legislative Session, many legislators made ethics reform a priority following the legal and ethical problems of a number of state elected officials. While the debate was often heated, in the end, we passed a comprehensive ethics reform bill that will fundamentally change the way business is done in Jefferson City . The bill will prohibit the laundering of political contributions, improve the powers of the Missouri Ethics Commission, require disclosure of campaign contributions exceeding \$500 during the legislative session, and make it a crime to offer a political appointment in exchange for a vote. These provisions will help improve transparency and accountability in your state government.

As with any session, some priorities failed to make it through the process. But despite a number of challenging circumstances, including a budget shortfall of historic proportions, I am confident that Missouri is better for the work we accomplished this session. Because there is still work left to be done, I look forward to next year's legislative session when we can revisit the many important issues facing our state.

In the Capitol

Last week was extremely hectic at the Capitol as legislators were rushing to get their legislative priorities passed before Friday's six o'clock deadline. In the midst of the chaos, I was still able to meet with a number of people from Springfield . On Wednesday, I met with representatives from Missouri State University and on Thursday, I was honored to host the 4th Grade Students from Sequiota Elementary School . They were a great group and I was thrilled to share the Capitol with them. Below is a picture of the students, teachers, and me on the Grand Staircase in the Capitol.



While I will be in Springfield for the summer and fall, I encourage you to contact my office if you would like to visit Jefferson City and tour the State Capitol, the Missouri Supreme Court, of the Governor's Mansion. My office would be happy to make the arrangements for you.

Capitol Connection

Please be sure to visit the [House of Representatives Homepage](#) where there are a number of video features about the current issues at the Capitol. Click [here](#) to view the end-of-session press conferences for, both, the Majority and Minority caucuses, discussing the end of the 2010 Legislative Session.

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