



Lair's Legislative Log...



REPRESENTATIVE MIKE LAIR—DISTRICT 7

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Last week was memorable in my legislative career because of the retirement of my Legislative Assistant Janice Sloca. We saw more killer tornadoes rip across the nation. Sixty-seven years ago today 160,000 Allied troops landed on a fifty-mile stretch of Normandy beach in the largest amphibious invasion in world history, the D-Day invasion of "Fortress Europe."

Tuesday, May 31 marked the end of a thirty-four year commitment to the people of Missouri. Janice began working in the Senate, continued in the Office of Administration, and finished with three years working with me. One of the most significant lessons that you must learn in the House is that you cannot do anything by yourself...and that lesson begins in your office. She was the perfect assistant to a fledgling legislator; she knew the "ropes" and knew how to share that information without seeming to manipulate. I am not a micro-manager, I believe in hiring good people, sharing expectations, and let them do the job for which they were hired. She always exceeded expectations and is loved and respected by many in the Capitol. Janice sent out a notification of her retirement following the weekly update to the several thousands of you that receive our update electronically. Within minutes, her inbox was flooded by best wishes and sincere messages of gratitude from constituents with whom she had worked. The scores of communications went from simple and heartfelt to specific descriptions of the

problems that they had worked through together. In three years, she had truly made a difference to the people of the 7th District and I add my sincerest hope that Janice enjoys her hobbies and her free time.

Wednesday, June 1 marked the beginning of Gregg Pfister's commitment to the people of the 7th District. I lured Gregg away from a Legislative Assistant's position in another member's office. I have watched him for several years and I am impressed by his work ethic and professionalism. He will put in four ten hour days in the office (Monday through Thursday) from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM during the interim. Gregg is interested in public policy. He will be researching several issues in preparation to me filing legislation. I will share his work as the year progresses. I look forward to a productive and rewarding relationship with him. Please feel free to call the office and say hi.

Redistricting has been completed for Missouri's eight Congressional Districts; now it is time for the thirty-four Senate and the hundred and sixty-three House districts to be redrawn. The process has begun with the gathering of a commission consisting of eighteen members, one Democrat and one Republican from each congressional district chosen by the Governor. The chairman, Joe Maxwell, a Democrat because the Governor is a Democrat, has overseen the drawing of a preliminary map. The past districts were cre-

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ated to have about 34,300 people in each; the current districts need to represent 36,700 people. With the current population shifts, the current 7th District would have to add about 2200 people to meet the one-man-one-vote guidelines. The first map the commission has proposed has renamed our district the 25th and consists of parts of Livingston, Linn, Sullivan, Macon, Chariton, and Carroll counties. It is a geographical nightmare and prompted the St. Louis Post Dispatch to report on their blog that they are sure no one on the commission will vote for this map, with the possible exception of the two partisan members that drew it. The paper went on to say that is was not a serious attempt to redistrict, it was only a ploy to throw the redistricting into the hands of the Missouri court system where they feel the Democrats have the advantage. The commission has until August 18th to submit a serious map to the Governor and if the map is not approved by a two-thirds vote of the commission by September 18th, it goes to the Judiciary.

There is no doubt that the redistricting process is an extremely partisan exercise, where each party tries to gain an advantage at the polls. I just hope that whoever draws the new districts remembers the three Cs that are supposed to guide them. The guidelines are compactness, contiguity, and competitiveness. As far as competitive goes, testimony was given at the first hearing held by the commission that out of the 163 House seats that were up for election in November of 2010, ninety-five of them were unopposed or won by a two-thirds margin.

Some good news this week, after three

decades of increased spending, Missouri is on track to reduce spending during FY 2012, which begins July 1 of this year. If the Governor signs the budget that the General Assembly sent him at the end of the session, the state will spend at least 1.9% less. It is not perfection, but it is progress.

Thank you for the privilege of representing the citizens of the 7th District. Gregg and I are at your service at (573) 751-2917, or mike.lair@house.mo.gov or State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Avenue, Room 400, Jefferson City, MO 65101. My website is www.RepMikeLair.com.

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