



# Lair's Legislative Log...



REPRESENTATIVE MIKE LAIR—DISTRICT 7

Volume III #31

August 1, 2011

VISIT MY  
WEB-SITE FOR  
ADDITIONAL  
INFORMATION

[www.RepMikeLair.com](http://www.RepMikeLair.com)

Room 400  
State Capitol

201 West Capitol Avenue  
Jefferson City, MO  
65101

PH: 573-751-2917

Fax: 573-566-9775

Email:

[Mike.Lair@house.mo.gov](mailto:Mike.Lair@house.mo.gov)



Keep up with the legislative process through the internet by visiting [www.house.mo.gov](http://www.house.mo.gov)

There you can view video clips, read legislation and hear the House Floor debate live.

The summer is quickly drawing to a close as area schools prepare for the re-opening of the fall semester. The deep irony of our love/hate relationship with water became all too evident to me with a trip down Highway 65 and the plans for the special session of the General Assembly gain momentum.

My in-district calendar is swiftly filling up with school and community events. In the educational sphere, I have been invited to three opening day sessions with area teachers, a classroom government lecture, visits to Truman State and North Central Missouri College and a retired teachers' dinner in Carroll County – so far. The list continues with civic groups, local state governmental agencies yearly meetings, individual constituents, and city/county government gatherings. To these entries, add a two-day Joint House/Senate Education Committee meeting, Veto Session, possible one to two week special session, and a proposed fact-finding trip with the Stet School Board to Kansas to observe a successful rural charter school in operation. I will do my best to attend any event to which you invite me. The summer after the first year of a two-year election cycle is my favorite time, because I can focus on the job of being your representative without the distraction of an election.

Mid-July was a great time for me. I was able to journey to Washington D.C. to visit my son who lives and

works there. I taught American History and American Government for almost four decades before I actually experienced our nation's capital. The sights and sounds of the city still astonish me. My son, who was an intern in the House Minority Whip's Office several years ago, gave my first tour of the Capitol. My personal favorites among the many points of interest are the World War II, Washington, and Lincoln Memorials. I include the WWII site in deference to my father and his generation and the sacrifices they made for us. My reverence for Lincoln increases the more I study the Civil War and recognize the skills and courage he expended holding this nation together. Additionally, to me, George Washington serves to represent all the founding fathers of this country and the sacrifices they made to institute the nation we have today. Washington must be one of the top ten "people watching" locations in the country.

As I traveled across the Eastern half of our country, two of the things that struck me were the gas prices and the toll roads. Gas prices were higher than in the 7<sup>th</sup> District everywhere. The highest price was in Washington, six blocks from the White House at \$4.95 per gallon; elsewhere in the same city, it was in the \$3.70s. Many states east of us use toll roads to fund their highways. The roads are, for the most part, in great shape and that method of funding the proposed overhaul of our interstate system may be

COMMITTEES:APPROPRIATIONS—  
EDUCATION, CHAIR

BUDGET

RETIREMENT

RULES

JOINT COMMITTEE  
ON EDUCATIONQUICK LINKS:HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES[www.house.mo.gov](http://www.house.mo.gov)

STATE:

[www.mo.gov](http://www.mo.gov)

SENATE:

[www.senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov)SERVING:

CALDWELL

CARROLL

LIVINGSTON

CLINTON (PART)

an answer we should take under consideration.

The Republican Majority Caucus was held in Branson late last week and as I drove south on highway 36, I saw crops that were in need of rain and crops that were drowned by the release of water by the Corps of Engineers. The extent of storm and man-made devastation statewide is massive. The amount of money necessary to cover the state's share of disaster relief is still unknown. We discussed several scenarios in which the state's Budget Reserve Fund (Rainy Day Fund) would be tapped to meet our obligations. The fund is about \$525M and exists for just such circumstances. Only half of the fund may be allocated at one time and it must be paid back within a three-year period. The state's share of recovery funds required will not be known for months. At caucus, we also discussed potential overrides of the Governor's vetoes. There seem to be at least three bills that can garner enough bipartisan support for an override effort.

By law, the Governor may withhold budgeted funds to cover revenue shortfalls. The rules covering this executive power are vague and in Fiscal Year 2011 there was a \$53M general revenue shortfall and he withheld \$273M from the budget, which seems, at least on the surface, to be excessive. The House Budget Chair has asked the Budget Director about this discrepancy, but has received no answer. The Speaker of the House has asked the Attorney General for an opinion on the Governor's actions.

We have not received an official call to a special session, but I am planning for the probability of a summons. The main focus is supposed to be an economic development jobs creation package along with a tax credit reform measure. There is a multiplicity of opinions as to the worth of the total package. There were a great many heated discussions on the bill already and there is no final draft as of yet. I will wait until the 376-page monster is printed and I have a chance to scrutinize it.

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

*Mike Lair*

