



Lair's Legislative Log...



REPRESENTATIVE MIKE LAIR—DISTRICT 7

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Thanksgiving week is a precursor for the advent of the winter driving season, family gatherings, football games and the holidays. Last week was American Education Week and I celebrated in several classrooms and with a gathering of retired teachers. I am beginning to see some of the legislative agenda we will be facing in the House during the Second Session of the 96th General Assembly.

I was pleased to visit two 7th District schools in celebration of National Education Week. My first stop, that has become an annual event, was at Bosworth R-V Schools at the invitation of teacher Veronica Bondy. I spent an hour with the combined Junior and Senior classes discussing state and federal government issues. These Carroll County young adults have many of the same questions and concerns that are voiced on my travels around the district. The questions revolved around the economy, Departments of Natural Resources and Conservation, legislative procedures, and state statutes. After the senior high class, I met with the primary grades and fielded additional questions, as well as read a book describing a mouse legislature debating the establishment of a national cheese; the national cheese, of course, turns out to be American.

At Mirabile C-I school, in Caldwell County, I was invited by fourth grader, Emily Smith, and her teacher Katy Havlack to visit on Wednesday. I be-

gan by reading to the primary grades and concluded the time by addressing the fourth-eight grades. The upper grades were well versed in government, as evidenced by their questions. It never ceases to comfort me, after I spend time in our rural schools, to experience the concerned professionalism of the faculty and staff. I want to thank Todd Park, Bosworth principal, and Mirabile's principal, Sheri Steinman for the educational leadership they afford their faculty and students. Students from these schools should go to my website www.RepMikeLair.com to see pictures from both of these school visits.

The Brookfield R-III School District and its superintendent, Paul Barger, hosted my third American Education Week event this week. Each year the Linn County School invites all of the retired educators from the area to a luncheon at the school's conference facility. I was pleased to be asked to offer remarks that centered on the state budget in general, the education budget in particular, issues affecting schools from the last session, and reform measures that I expect to see on this year's legislative agenda. Jim Kreider, the executive director of the Missouri Retired Teacher association was in attendance as well. The event was quite well attended and allowed me to become acquainted with a considerable number of Linn County residents.

Missouri Attorney General, Chris Kos-

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ter, has reacted to the Penn State sex abuse scandal by requesting the General Assembly pass legislation that requires all Missouri adults to report all instances of child abuse and/or neglect to authorities. Social workers, health-care professionals, law enforcement officials, all school personnel, and ministers are already required by law to report suspected cases. I understand that the A.G.'s request is well intentioned, but so were the proponents of the *Facebook Law* that we had to fix during the special session. Our children must be protected from predators, but we need to take it slowly before we require our citizens to report everything they see, rather than conflicting with the law. It is my understanding that several states have passed similar legislation; I would like to know if these laws have helped protect children and if they have helped to identify and punish abusers.

The Missouri Department of Transportation has sent several epistles this week that I would like to share with you. First, winter weather, long holiday trips, and holiday parties help create situations on our highways that are dangerous. Be extra observant and wear your seatbelts. Secondly, MoDOT would like to share *The Tracker*, a tool to let Missouri citizens, "know how well they are delivering services and products to their customers. It reflects what we do well, and what we don't do so well." To view a full copy of the *October 2011 Tracker*, visit their website at http://www.modot.mo.gov/about/general_info/Tracker.htm

Thanksgiving is a perfect time to reflect on our state of being. I am thank-

ful for my family, my health, my place in God's creation. As my wife points out to me, I am lucky to have found two avocations that I love. Many people go through their working careers at jobs they do not enjoy. I sincerely loved working with young people for four decades while teaching and coaching and I am joyfully immersed in the legislative process as your representative. I wish you all a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Thank you for the privilege of representing the citizens of the 7th District. Gregg will be out of the office this week, if you need me, please call my cell phone 660-247-1856 or email at 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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