



# Lair's Legislative Log...



REPRESENTATIVE MIKE LAIR—DISTRICT 7

Volume IV #6

February 6, 2012

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.

I consider myself truly blessed by my choice of a second avocation. My family has voiced multiple times how lucky I am to have found two professions that I love. I have never dreaded going to work. My first career of four decades of teaching and coaching in high schools was a high calling that allowed me to positively influence literally thousands of young people. Public service has been a great way to use my education and people skills for the good of the citizens of our state.

My Appropriations – Education Committee took almost six hours of testimony this week. On Tuesday, we completed the DESE and Department of Higher Education budget requests. On Wednesday, we did yeoman work with four hours of testimony, in two sessions, from the public university presidents on the effect of the governor's 12.5% cuts to their budgets. The mood was somber, but rather than desperate, I saw a determined mind-set from these institutional leaders. Some of their plans for dealing with the cut revolved around a hiring freeze, tuition raise, use of reserve funds, energy savings, refinance of debt, deferred maintenance, pay cut, program reduction, and reduced scholarships.

Other committee action included the passage of my bill, HB 1174, to help the State School Board deal with unaccredited districts. I wrote about this bill at length last week and will not belabor it again. I am hoping that it reaches the House floor within the next two weeks.

There are a multitude of bills that are beginning to move in the House. House Bill 1526 is one of the most far-reaching and controversial of these. There are four major components of what is known as the *Missouri Teacher Quality Act*. The first component is teacher tenure that has become the watchword for school reform nationwide. This particular bill has changed somewhat from last year's attempt. You can read the specifics on the House web site. As I have said repeatedly, I will not support any tenure bill that does not contain equitable evaluation and a guarantee of due process. The second piece of this bill deals with standardizing educator performance evaluation and focuses on student progress. The third section addresses the way that educators are compensated. It allows each district to set its own policy rather than the statutory restrictions that are now in place. Lastly, it removes the "last-in, first-out" policy that sees the least experienced teachers targeted for a reduction in force when a school district eliminates staff due to budget issues. The hope is that the district will retain the best teachers, not just the most experienced. Like most far reaching pieces of legislation, there are good and bad parts to this one, and I will reserve my judgment until I see the finished product come to the floor of the House.

Charter schools legislation moved through the House and Senate last week, with the House hearing HB 1228 in a marathon seven hour hearing

COMMITTEES:**CHAIR:**APPROPRIATIONS—  
EDUCATION,**MEMBER:**

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)

and the Senate taking testimony on a companion bill, SB 576. These are both complicated pieces of legislation that will face stiff opposition in both bodies.

I experienced the purest form of lobbying this week. Two separate organizations and a regional group were present in great numbers in my office and in the halls of the capital. On Wednesday, two groups representing the Missouri Public Transit Association visited my office. This organization is more commonly known as OATS. The delegations were large and filled my office with citizens from Hamilton and Chillicothe. Their message was clear. The OATS program serves rural Missouri in a sector that is important to our elderly and infirm. I will do my best to maintain funding at current levels for this important service.

The second group was the county commissioners who were attending the Missouri Association of County Commissioners Conference in the City of Jefferson. Delegations from Grundy, Livingston, and Caldwell were in the office on Thursday morning. Joe Brinser, Gene Wyant, and Rick Hall of Grundy County were joined by the Livingston County cohort made up of Presiding Commissioner Danner, Todd Rodenberg, and Ken Lauhoff. Our main discussion item was the proposed fee on cell phones for 911 services. Later Thursday morning, the Caldwell County commission composed of Bud Motsinger, Donnie Cox, and Gerald McBrayer stopped to share the MAC legislative agenda and discuss matters specific to Caldwell County.

As I previously stated, these groups

represent the purist form of lobbying. They are sharing specific concerns directly with their representatives in state government. Early in the week, another such assembly was the Great Northwest Days. It was magnificent. I was able to meet with representatives from all five counties I do/and hope to represent. It is a chance for our region of rural Missouri to acquaint legislators and other members of state government with our concerns and what we have to offer. No other region has an event like it. The big tourist areas and metropolitan areas offer receptions, but there is no other rural gathering like GNWD. It is attended by more members of state government than any of the other scores of events to which we are invited.

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*

