



REPRESENTATIVE

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SERVING THE PEOPLE OF

MISSOURI'S 7TH DISTRICT



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LAIR'S LEGISLATIVE LOG

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This past week we have seen the conclusion of the primary election with some surprises and some forgone conclusions. We dealt with the departments of Economic Development, Labor and Industrial Relations, Social Services, Corrections, and Elementary and Secondary Education in our role as constituent advocates. I had a great visit and lunch with the clientele of the new Livingston County Senior Center and enjoyed the Kidder 150-year celebration.

At the recent Educated Citizenry 2020 Conference that I attended, Missouri K-12 Education Commissioner, Chris Nicastro announced that our state was not named as a finalist in the competition for \$3.4 billion in grants in the federal "Race to the Top" program. The commissioner went on to say..."Missouri had worked on several educational improvements including curriculum models, teacher evaluation, and building better data systems to monitor student development." Nicastro added, "We will pursue these improvements even without federal money." This federal program illustrates government's perceived attempt to control education in this country. Many educational and political leaders have called for the elimination of the United States Department of Education. They say the stakeholders who are directly involved - the parents, the teachers, and local organizations - should make decisions on local educational issues. The "Race to the Top" program places the federal government in a position to pick winners and losers with \$3.4 billion of your tax dollars. Some opponents of the program have called it "Race to the Trough."

The 2010 Primary Election has come and gone and the only ballot issue Proposition C was a landslide winner by a margin of three to one. I was not surprised by the outcome only by the margin. Missouri's role as the first state to place the measure before its voters was watched nationwide. Several other states have passed bills with similar wording and several more states will have almost identical ballot measures in November. I believe the arrogance of some of our national leadership is illustrated in the following remark quoted in the Wall Street Journal by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, "...Missourians aren't educated enough to understand the health care reform bill." I would hope that one or both of our senators took exception to that remark.

As a relatively new member of the political world, reality struck hard as I studied the results of the 163 Missouri House races. In the results of the primaries, I saw representatives of both parties who I perceived worked hard and represented their districts extremely well lose, and the converse happened as well. There are thousands of variables at play when you represent 35,000 citizens.

One of my major duties as your elected representative is to deal with unresponsive state bureaucrats. My lunch and legislative update session at the Chillicothe Area Senior Center was a great example. Five constituents had issues with state government that Janice and I will address. Many times these conflicts revolve around a failure in communications and can be resolved quickly, but there are occurrences where we must take the offending agency to task. Several of the state departments are quite easy to work with and others seem to forget for whom they work. This is one of my favorite parts of my job. Janice, my legislative assistant, has been in state government service for more than three decades. She knows the people and the structure of these agencies and knows whom to call to get answers. We make a great team and have handled hundreds of constituent concerns during my first two years. When you see me in your town, do not hesitate to communicate your problem...or call us at the numbers listed below. I cannot promise the successful conclusion of every hassle you have with state government, but I can promise that we will address your concern with the proper bureaucrat.

Speaking of Janice, even dedicated and talented workers need a break; Janice will be taking a vacation this week. My cell phone number is listed below for your convenience.

The calendar is filling up quickly for the next several months. We have our Veto Session in mid-September, a caucus conference, two Joint House/Senate Education Committee hearings, and other legislative commitments. I am scheduled to speak to school groups, civic organizations, prison graduation ceremonies, church groups, and small cadres of concerned citizens. If you would like me to speak to your group, please contact me early; I will do my best to get you on my schedule.

It is an honor to represent the 7th District citizens of Caldwell, Carroll, Clinton, and Livingston Counties. If I can assist you, please contact me by email at mike.lair@house.mo.gov or by cell phone at 660-247-1856. Our Capitol address is State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Avenue, Room 305A, Jefferson City, MO 65101, and my website is www.RepMikeLair.com.

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