

State Senator

S. Kiki Curls



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District 9 - 2017 Legislative Review





Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2017 legislative session came to a close May 12. My office has been using this time during the interim to be back home in Kansas City, meeting with citizens, attending area events and drafting legislation for the upcoming session.

In this legislative review, you will find updates on several of the measures I sponsored this year, information on the annual budget and highlights from the 11th Annual Public Health & Safety Fair.

As always, it is an honor to serve as your voice in the Missouri State Senate. I remain committed to working hard every day to further the interests of the men, women and children of the 9th District.

Sincerely,

S. Kiki Curls
State Senator

Senator Curls' Sponsored Legislation

I am pleased to say the governor has signed into law two of the measures I sponsored this session. Language I filed pertaining to Kansas City's school board elections was sent to the governor's desk as part of Senate Bill 283. Among other provisions, this measure will provide some much-needed consistency to Kansas City Public Schools during a critical time in our school district's history. In 2013, Senate Bill 258 changed Missouri law regarding the date on which the Kansas City Public Schools school board elections would occur and reduced the number of school board members from nine to seven, aligning it with other districts throughout the state. The effective date was set for 2019. Senate Bill 283 modifies the 2013 law and authorizes initial staggered terms of school board members in 2019. This will allow the Kansas City School District to avoid having a full and complete turnover of our sitting board on one election day.

I also sponsored a measure this session allowing the Kansas City Police Department to add an additional lieutenant colonel, who will be responsible for investigating matters relating to homeland security in the Kansas City area and coordinating disaster relief efforts when necessary. Our current statute allows only five lieutenant colonels in our police department. Passed as part of Senate Bill 112, my language simply raises the number from five to six to accommodate the growing need for homeland security investigations.

Discrimination Has No Place in Missouri

On June 30, the governor signed into law Senate Bill 43, a "pro-business" piece of legislation that will harm Missouri workers by making it more difficult for those who have been discriminated against to receive justice. Previously under Missouri law, to win an employment discrimination case, an employee only had to prove a protected status, such as race or religion, was a contributing factor in their termination or mistreatment. Now, thanks to SB 43, an employee must prove bias was a motivating factor in their employer's discrimination. Among several other harmful provisions, SB 43 also caps the amount of punitive damages an employee who has been discriminated against can receive. There is no other way to put it, SB 43 will make it easier for employers to discriminate against their employees. As a woman and an African American, this legislation has been particularly egregious, troubling and hurtful, and I am profoundly disappointed it was signed into law. While the full ramifications of SB 43 remain to be seen, the measure has already prompted the NAACP to issue its first-ever travel advisory for a single state.

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

I was disappointed to see lawmakers once again fail to establish the Missouri Senior Farmers' Market Nutritional Program. This program would have provided low-income seniors with vouchers that could be exchanged for eligible food items at farmers' markets, roadside stands and community-supported agriculture programs. According to the National Council on Aging, in 2014, an estimated 10.2 million seniors faced the threat of hunger. The Council also reports the rate of food insecurity among older adults is growing. My legislation, Senate Bill 373, truly would have been a win-win for all parties, providing nutritious meals and local produce for some of Missouri's most vulnerable citizens while supporting local economies and increasing profitability for area farmers.



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Missouri Seniors, Disabled Face Uncertainty After Governor's Veto

Due to the state's strained Fiscal Year 2018 budget situation, the governor proposed raising the threshold for the elderly and disabled to qualify for in-home care and nursing care programs, which would have caused thousands to lose access to care. To keep this from happening, House Committee Bill 3 was offered to repeal a portion of the Missouri Property Tax Credit, more commonly known as the "circuit breaker" program. The program helps low-income seniors and the disabled remain in their homes by giving them what is basically a 20 percent refund on the property taxes or rent they pay. It is a modest amount, but it often means not having to choose between buying groceries and affording their medication.

Clearly, neither one of these options — repealing a portion of the circuit breaker program or not repealing it and have thousands of our seniors and disabled lose access to in-home and nursing care programs — was the right decision. That is why I offered an amendment to HCB 3 to allow the Office of Administration to do a one-time sweep of \$35.4 million in unused funds from Missouri's various boards, commissions and agencies. The money was to be deposited into the Missouri Senior Services Protection Fund to cover the costs of the circuit breaker program in its entirety, as well as in-home and nursing care services for approximately 8,000 disabled or elderly Missourians.

Although my amendment passed with bipartisan support in both chambers, the governor vetoed HCB 3, and the measure was not taken up for an override attempt during September's veto session. Without the funding HCB 3 would have provided, I fear many of our low-income seniors and disabled, and even some of our veterans, will be forced to rely on emergency rooms for their medical care and/or end up in nursing homes much sooner than they would have otherwise, all at significant taxpayer expense.

Senator Curls Welcomes Area Students to the Capitol



Senator Curls welcomes students from Border Star Montessori School in Kansas City to the beautiful Capitol in Jefferson City.

Senator Curls Hosts 11th Annual Public Health & Safety Fair

In July, I hosted the 11th Annual Public Health & Safety Fair at Arrowhead Stadium, home of the Kansas City Chiefs. Thanks to our valued sponsors and wonderful partnerships with the Black Health Care Coalition, Office of Minority Health, Kansas City Police Department and Truman Medical Centers, we were able to provide area residents with the tools they need to help fight and prevent disease while supporting a healthy lifestyle.

This year's record crowd of more than 3,500 men, women and children enjoyed a variety of beneficial services and fun activities, which were provided by 120 vendors. Health specialists provided student sports physicals and an estimated 1,500 adult health screenings, including body mass index readings and dental checks. In addition, safety experts assisted with car and booster seat installation and offered bicycle safety tips. We also gave away 750 vouchers to the Truman Medical Center Mobile Market and raffled off 100 new bicycles to area youth.

For over a decade, I have watched with growing pride as the Public Health & Safety Fair has expanded its reach with each passing year. I sincerely wish to thank all of this year's sponsors and partners. Most especially, thank you to the Kansas City Chiefs organization for going above and beyond in serving our community. I hope to see many new and familiar faces at next year's fair.



Senator S. Kiki Curls

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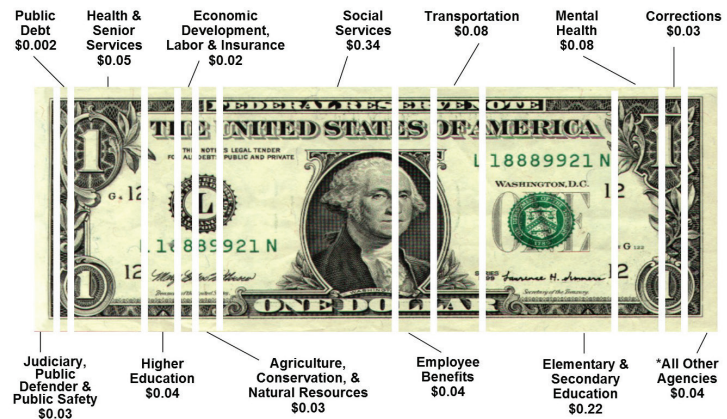
Missouri's Spending Plan for Fiscal Year 2018

The biggest highlight of this year's \$27.6 billion budget came as a result of state lawmakers voting to fully fund Missouri's current Foundation Formula for the first time since it was passed by the Legislature in 2005. While this is overall a positive step forward, it is important to note that full funding only became possible after lawmakers passed legislation in 2016 that drastically reduced the total amount required to fully fund the formula. With a fully funded Foundation Formula, Missouri school districts will receive nearly \$3.4 billion in basic aid for FY 2018. Additionally, school districts will be able to claim state aid to fund preschool programs for Fiscal Year 2019.

Senator Curls Championed These Budgetary Items for the 9th Senate District and Surrounding KC Area

- \$50,000 - American Jazz Redevelopment Authority
- \$50,000 - Jazz and Heritage Festival
- \$100,000 - Buck O'Neil Community Center
- \$150,000 - Negro Leagues Museum
- \$178,000 - Kansas City Re-entry Programs
- \$400,000 - UMKC Neighborhood Initiative
- \$2,000,000 - Bartle Hall Convention Center
- \$3,000,000 - Jackson County Sports Authority (Arrowhead & Kauffman)
- \$3,000,000 - UMKC/MSSU Cooperative Dental Program
- \$4,491,323 - Kansas City Regional Center
- \$5,000,000 - UM System KC Area Cooperative Medical Student Training
- \$33,245,324 - Metropolitan Community Colleges
- \$418,897,069 - University of Missouri System

DISTRIBUTION OF EACH TAX DOLLAR
FISCAL YEAR 2018 AFTER VETO TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET
All Funds: \$27.710 Billion



*Revenue, Office of Administration, Elected Officials, General Assembly, and Statewide Real Estate

SENATOR CURLS' COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Administration
Agriculture, Food Production & Outdoor Resources
Appropriations

Gubernatorial Appointments
Progress and Development, Vice Chairwoman
Transportation, Infrastructure & Public Safety