



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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SEN. BARTLE ANNOUNCES “FAMILY FRIENDLY WORK ACT” — PROMOTING TELEWORK IN MISSOURI

JEFFERSON CITY – State Sen. Matt Bartle, R-Lee’s Summit, today announced that he will pre-file the “Family Friendly Work Act” in the Missouri Senate. This bill will encourage businesses in Missouri to take advantage of modern technologies and business practices to provide their employees the opportunity to “telecommute” and to have more flexible work schedules.

“It is clear that many parents would love to have the opportunity to spend more time at home and to craft work, to some degree, around their family and personal lives,” Bartle said. “The technological revolution we have experienced in recent years is altering the marketplace, giving us the opportunity to move beyond the 8-to-5 workday spent at an office across town.”

The “Family Friendly Work Act” would have far-reaching positive effects for Missouri. Not only would parents have more flexibility to work from home and spend more time with their children, but lessening the number of commutes to the office will decrease traffic congestion, gasoline consumption, air pollution from auto emissions and will reduce wear on Missouri’s roadways. Another benefit of telecommuting is that businesses will be more resilient in the event of a natural disaster, a major winter storm, such as the state experienced in November, or even a potential terrorist attack. Telework also provides new opportunities to disabled citizens and parents with small children who find it difficult to leave the house. It has also been found to lower overhead expenses for businesses by allowing them to reduce the amount of physical work space they must provide for employees.

“My legislation offers tax incentives for companies that allow employees to work from home or to work more flexible schedules,” Bartle said.

The measure provides tax breaks for qualifying businesses offering a mix of flextime, telecommuting, compressed schedules or job-sharing to employees. It also offers low-interest startup loans for small home-based businesses.

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“Flextime” allows employees to work longer hours during busy seasons in exchange for hours off during slower periods. “Compressed schedules” let employees work longer shifts in order to spend fewer days per week at the office, such as working four 10-hour days instead of five eight-hour days. Likewise, offering “job sharing,” where two part-time employees share one position, to workers with small children and providing onsite daycares that allow parents and children to spend more time together and reduce time lost by commuting to and from traditional child-care centers are important ways to make work more flexible and family-friendly.

“Allowing Missourians the flexibility to work in ways that are more conducive to raising a family while at the same time reducing traffic congestion and overhead costs to businesses is a ‘win-win’ concept for employers, employees, and even government,” Bartle said. “I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this measure in the 2007 legislative session.”

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