

State Senator
Doug Libla District 25



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2020 Capitol Report



State Senator
Doug Libla
201 W. Capitol Ave.
Room 422
Jefferson City, MO
65101

573-751-4843
senate.mo.gov/Libla

To the constituents of the 25th Senatorial District,

Since I was first elected to public office in 2012, my mission has been to represent the values of my constituents, protect our most vulnerable citizens and sponsor legislation to sustain and attract jobs to southeast Missouri.

During my tenure in the Missouri Senate, I enjoyed applying the business principles and real-life experiences I have learned throughout my career to the legislative process. My top priority has always been to support our citizens and the robust communities of southeast Missouri. My love for our district is well known in the Missouri Senate!

My entire legislative career has been richly blessed with the many relationships developed with constituents in the 25th district, as well as colleagues and staff at the Capitol. It is always exciting to have the opportunity to speak about the important role our district plays in Missouri's economic well-being and to promote the unique aspects of our culture and its history. It has been a privilege to showcase our community's great manufacturing plants and businesses; schools and community colleges; the tourism industry supported by our beautiful lakes, rivers and timberland; the bountiful agricultural contributions of our expansive row crop and cattle farms; and our many other resources.

Each year, one of my biggest legislative challenges has been standing up to large investor-owned and regulated electric, gas and water companies. It appears, their appetite for excessive profits has led them to promote legislation almost every session in hopes of undermining the authority and oversight of the Public Service Commission (PSC). This required a considerable amount of time, energy and diplomacy skills, but I believe we prevented many rate increases for our hard working families and businesses.

Now, I look forward to continuing my mission, as a volunteer, to serve southeast Missouri through the E.R.A.S.E. Foundation. The foundation works to stimulate and encourage future generations of Americans to be successful in their pursuit of happiness. The foundation's goal is to create partnerships with local, faith-based outreach centers throughout southeast Missouri, more specifically, in rural and impoverished areas that have limited, or no access, to after-school programs. By offering free tutoring and mentoring programs, computer labs for digital learning, reading assistance and life skill classes, the foundation ensures that some of our most underserved children will have greater access to future opportunities and successes.

It has been an honor to serve you in the Missouri Senate. Though my time in the State Senate is ending, I ask you to stay engaged in the legislative process. If you are passionate about an issue, I urge you to make the beautiful drive to Jefferson City and testify at a bill's legislative hearing. Get to know your new legislators and provide them with the same solid foundation that helped me in Jefferson City. Reach out to your local and legislative leaders and offer to be a resource. **There will always be more work to do, and we will always need hardworking Missourians to carry it out.**

I sincerely appreciate all of the love, support and guidance I have received during this journey. Most importantly, thank you to my wife, Elaine, and my entire family; without whom I could not have done this work.

Lastly, to all my staff, whether it was at home or in Jefferson City, I appreciate all you have done and dealt with throughout the past eight years to assist our district and help make my job a pleasure. You have replied to countless emails, answered multiple phone calls, juggled appointments and responded to our constituents' needs quickly and efficiently. We made a great team, and I will always be proud of the accomplishments we reached together.

It has been such an honor working with you to fulfill this mission, and together we have helped the people who have needed us the most.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Libla".

Senator Doug Libla

Protecting Utility Payers



I believe that large, investor-owned utility companies want to control the ratemaking process by rendering the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) powerless. For over 100 years, the PSC has provided checks and balances on monopoly utility companies to prevent them from unfairly raising rates without due process and without evidence of the need.

Out of a sense of responsibility to Missouri families and businesses, I spent a lot of time defending ratepayers, like yourself, by standing up to these companies and opposing legislation which, in my opinion, would have diminished the PSC's oversight.

Strengthening Families by Nurturing Children



One of the proudest accomplishments of my Senate career was passing Senate Bill 530. Now law, this legislation encouraged alcohol and drug addicted parents to get the help they needed in a timely fashion so they could provide a safe, nurturing home for their children and restore the family unit.

The bill helped to reduce the agonizing wait time that kids and prospective foster or adoptive parents had to spend in the foster care system. The intent of my legislation was to make it faster and easier to either reunite children with their recovered parents or move the children out of foster care and into loving, adoptive homes.

PAVING THE WAY TO SUCCESS

The lack of adequate and steady funding for our roads and bridges affects the safety of our families and friends, as well as the economic well-being of our state. Throughout my time in the Missouri Senate, my stance was to support legislation that ensured the long-term sustainability of our state's transportation infrastructure. Due to more fuel-efficient vehicles, we are basically receiving the same amount of funds, or less, for our roads as we did a decade ago.

To find work, some of Missouri's very best highway construction companies, along with their highly skilled workers, are traveling to neighboring states which are investing heavily in roads to build their state's highways and bridges.

What company would want to relocate or expand in Missouri without a reasonable assurance or expectation that our roads and bridges will be maintained and improved to meet their requirements, both now and in the future?



Innovating Education

In 2018, my top priority was sponsoring legislation to incentivize high school students to take computer science courses. Senate Bill 894 added coding and programming to computer science standards, along with guidelines for implementation in K-12 curriculum. This legislation allows computer science courses to count as credits toward the requirements needed to graduate.

Computer science drives innovation throughout our economy, and legislation like this helps to provide the necessary and skilled workforce for this growing, in-demand industry. The expansion of rural, high-speed internet is a must in order to create these jobs in our district in the 21st century.

Show-Me Raider Pride!



In January, I presented a Senate Resolution to Christy Frazier-Moore who was honored with the first Three Rivers College Alumni Star Award.

Two of our beloved coaches reached milestones this year as well. Gene Bess has been a men's basketball coach for 50 years and has achieved 1,300 college wins!

Lady Raider basketball coach, Jeff Walk, retired after a stellar career of 12 years at TRC and 20 previous years at Twin Rivers High School. Leaders like these make me proud to be a Raider!

Senator Doug Libla

201 W Capitol Ave Rm 422

Jefferson City MO 65101

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Highlights from the 2020 Legislative Session

The 2020 legislative session didn't look like any other session due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Very few people entered the Capitol during the final days of the 2020 legislative session, and those who did enter were screened for potential exposure or symptoms. The Legislature reconvened to pass the state budget for the 2021 fiscal year, the only task we are constitutionally required to do every year. It was absolutely necessary for the Legislature to come together and pass the state's FY 2021 operating budget to ensure our government remains funded, open and able to serve the citizens of Missouri.

Public Safety

During this legislative session, I was proud to sponsor legislation that I believe will increase public safety and prevent crime. My Senate Bill

538 increases the penalty from a Class D felony to a Class C felony for the unlawful possession of a firearm by a person previously convicted of a dangerous felony. The goal of this legislation is to reduce crimes and deter criminals from using deadly weapons. These provisions have been approved by the Legislature and are awaiting the governor's consideration.

Digital Licensing

Provisions from my Senate Bill 906 have also been sent to the governor's desk. This legislation permits the Department of Revenue to design and implement a secure digital driver's license program so applicants may obtain a digital driver's license in addition to a physical card. In an effort to improve customer service and streamline processes, this bill also gives the Department of Revenue the ability to create an online driver's license renewal system.