



Legislative Column for the Week of Feb. 5

Greetings,

It is a busy time in the State Capitol. The Missouri Senate has started floor discussion on several legislative proposals. This is an important step in our body's deliberative process, normally coming after committee review of a bill but before a final vote is taken in the Senate. It's an opportunity to offer critique or support for some of our colleagues' efforts — and to carefully inspect and amend potentially harmful proposals before it's too late.

One of those proposals, [Senate Bill 561](#), would establish work requirements for underprivileged individuals receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP. I oppose this bill, and made that intention clear on the Senate floor. Work requirements may sound good in theory, but not everyone in need of help can — or should — go to work every day. Many people receiving SNAP benefits come from the lowest rungs of society: the elderly, the disabled and single parents just trying to make ends meet. Often, it's hard for these folks to find a job that will accept them, even if they want to work. Why should we punish them for that?

If passed, Senate Bill 561 will have dire consequences. It is unfair to starve a child for the actions of his or her parent, but that's exactly what this bill would do. If we take away SNAP benefits from parents that aren't working, it's their children who will go hungry, and through no fault of their own. Where else will these kids get food if their caregivers can't provide? Missouri should nurture and support its youngest citizens. All this bill would do is harm their interests.

Another measure heard recently, [Senate Bill 563](#), is more promising. Under current law, the Missouri Rx Plan, established by the General Assembly to coordinate Missouri prescription drug assistance with Medicare benefits, is only open to Medicaid dual-eligible individuals — those qualifying for both Medicare and Medicaid — who fall beneath a specified income level. Senate Bill 563 would do away with the dual-eligible requirement for MORx, but keep the income stipulations intact.

I think Senate Bill 563 is a good idea, and so do many of my colleagues. Last week, the Senate passed the bill with broad support, sending it to the House of Representatives for further action. The dual-eligible requirement was never an original part of the program; it was created to counteract state budget woes during last year's legislative session. It is time we restored MORx to its former glory by once again opening it to a wide range of low-income Missourians.

Below, you will find a chart tracking the progress of every bill I have sponsored in the 2018 legislative session. These proposals are important to Missourians of all backgrounds. I look forward to discussing each and every one of them before the Missouri Senate.

[Sen. Curls' Sponsored Legislation for 2018](#)

<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>
Senate Bill 779	Modifies provisions of law relating to long-term care certificates of need.	Second read and referred to Senate Health and Pensions Committee.
Senate Bill 780	Allows certain people to enter abandoned property to secure it, remove trash and graffiti,	Hearing scheduled for Senate Judiciary and Civil

and maintain the grounds and provides immunity from civil and criminal liability.

and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.

Senate Bill 781

Establishes notice procedures for potential adverse action against a State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts licensee who is delinquent on state taxes or has failed to file state income tax returns in the last three years.

Second read and referred to Senate Professional Registration Committee.

Senate Bill 787

Establishes the Missouri Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.

Voted do pass by Senate Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources Committee.

Senate Bill 855

Requires the State Board of Education to assign classification designations to charter schools in the same manner as school districts are assigned such designations.

Second read and referred to Senate Education Committee.

Senate Bill 856

Modifies provisions relating to the Public School Retirement System of Kansas City.

Second read and referred to Senate Health and Pensions Committee.

Senate Bill 857

Modifies provisions of law relating to the placement of children.

Second read and referred to Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.

Senate Bill 858

Modifies provisions of law relating to investigations of child abuse or neglect.

Second read and referred to Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.

Senate Bill 930

Modifies provisions of law relating to guardians ad litem.

Second read and referred to Senate Seniors, Families and Children Committee.

Senate Bill 954

Allows individuals found guilty of certain offenses of unlawful use of a weapon to expunge records relating to such offense.

Hearing conducted in Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee.

Senate Bill 965

Modifies provisions relating to the "Hand-Up Program" and child care subsidies.

Second read and referred to Senate Seniors, Families and Children Committee.

**Senate Joint
Resolution 32**

Requires certain statewide elected officials, members of the General Assembly, and judges to receive cost-of-living adjustments if such adjustments are provided to all state employees.

Second read and referred to Senate Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics Committee.

Please know I value your input, and I invite you to visit my Capitol office if you are ever in Jefferson City. You may access my Senate website at senate.mo.gov/curls.

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