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Capitol Report
February 21, 2019

Nursing students from University of Central Missouri visited my office as part of their advocacy day at the State Capitol. The students had the opportunity to watch the House as it debated bills, and I enjoyed meeting with the students and listening to their concerns about legislation that relates to the nursing profession. I look forward to meeting more students from the district as session continues.

Senate Receives House Bill Modifying Provisions for Coroners (HB 447):

This week the House gave final approval for my bill that would improve training for local coroners. The bill would establish the Coroner Standards and Training Commission for establishing training standards that elected coroners must fulfill before signing death certificates. These new training standards would ensure that coroners gain the correct knowledge and technical skills for meeting the legal responsibilities of their office. In order to fund coroners' training, the bill would establish a \$1.00 fee for all death certificates that would be applied to the Missouri State Coroners' Training Fund.

The House also approved an amendment to the bill so that coroners and medical examiners would not have to investigate deaths that occurred under hospice care. The current law requiring coroners and medical examiners to investigate a death in a home does not account for the increase in the use of hospice care for terminal patients. This amendment would allow the physician treating a patient or the hospice director to certify when a patient has died due to natural causes relating to a disease or known illness. A coroner or medical examiner must be notified within 24 hours of such a death.

The bill has been sent to the Senate and is awaiting referral to a Senate committee.

House Approves "Closing Fund" Legislation (HB 255):

House members passed legislation that would give the Missouri Department of Economic

Development an additional tool to bring new jobs to Missouri. The bill would modify an existing state program to establish a closing fund the department can use to make agreements with companies to create new jobs in the state.

The bill would enhance the existing Missouri Works Program, which helps businesses access capital through withholdings or tax credits to embark on facility expansions and create jobs. The legislation would allow a little more than 20 percent of the program to be devoted to a closing fund that would allow the department to offer tax credits within a year of closing a deal that requires a business to meet certain job creation criteria. Under the plan, a qualified company could receive a tax credit of up to 9 percent of new payroll issued within one year as long as the company creates 10 or more jobs that pay 100 percent or more of the county average wage. The program would be capped at \$25 million and reevaluated every two years.

The sponsor of the legislation told his colleagues, “This just gives the Department of Economic Development another tool in the toolbox to compete for jobs and the expansion of business in our state.”

The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

House Passes Bill to Support Victims of Domestic Violence (HB 243 & 544):

Another bill sent to the Senate this week by the House would make changes to Missouri’s landlord-tenant laws in an effort to better protect victims of domestic violence. It would prevent anyone at risk of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking from being evicted, being denied tenancy, or violating a lease agreement as a result of that risk. Anyone who is a victim, or is in imminent danger of being victimized, would be able to use this as a defense if a landlord takes them to court. The bills would establish what evidence a landlord must accept as proof of such situations.

I appreciate you allowing me to serve as your voice in Jefferson City.

Sincerely,



Dan Houx

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