



Week of Feb. 10, 2017

Appropriations Committee Begins Budget Work

This week the Senate Appropriations Committee began the tough and necessary work of editing and finalizing the governor's proposed budget. As I've stated previously, I take the work of crafting the state budget very seriously. Your tax dollars need to be spent in the most prudent ways possible.

Each department comes before the committee to bring their needs to our attention and explain where the funds will be used during the fiscal year. It is our job to listen carefully and consider the information we are given. I assure you I will work carefully and use my skills as a CPA to make the best decisions for our state and its citizens.

Also happening this week was a hearing on Senate Bill 335. Senate Bill 335 would add "mental health service dog" to the definition of a service dog. A mental health service dog, or psychiatric service dog, is a dog that has been specially trained for an owner who has a psychiatric disability, medical condition or developmental disability. Some of those disabilities can include autism spectrum disorder, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder and schizophrenia. These dogs are trained to perform tasks to assist the owner, including alerting or responding to panic attacks and anxiety, as well as performing other tasks directly related to the owner's disability.

The use of service dogs for veterans has risen steadily with the increased instances of PTSD and other mental health issues suffered by our military personnel. With the large military and veteran population in the 21st Senate District, this legislation is critical to those in need of these services. Anyone in need of this type of service dog should be able to have one and take it wherever they go. I'm confident this bill will be passed out of the Seniors, Families and Children Committee and will be debated on the Senate floor.

For your convenience, we have created a table below with all of the bills I have sponsored for this legislative session. It will be updated as each bill moves through the process.

Bill Number and Description	Heard in Committee	Passed by Committee	Debated on Senate floor	Passed by Senate
Senate Bill 257 - Allows telephone companies to select an alternate method of property tax assessment	Referred to Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy and the Environment Committee – awaiting a public hearing			
Senate Bill 280 - Requires the Department of Revenue to issue both REAL ID compliant and noncompliant driver's licenses and identification cards	Public Hearing Conducted in Veterans and Military Affairs Committee			
Senate Bill 335 Modifies the definition of a service dog	Public Hearing Conducted in Seniors, Families and Children Committee			
Senate Bill 359 - Modifies provisions relating to the promotion and sale of alcoholic beverages	Referred to Small Business and Industry Committee – awaiting public hearing			
Senate Bill 360 - Modifies provisions relating to virtual public schools	Referred to Education Committee – awaiting public hearing			
Senate Bill 375 - Changes the law regarding consent for a minor to obtain an abortion				
Senate Bill 376 - Designates "Old Drum" as the historical dog of the state of Missouri				
Senate Bill 395 -				

Modifies provisions relating to the practice of public accounting				
Senate Concurrent Resolution 7 - Expresses support for the people of Israel	Referred to Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics Committee – awaiting public hearing			
Senate Bill 183 - Extends the Big Government Get Off My Back Act and modifies several provisions relating to the collection of money by public entities	Referred to Senate Government Reform Committee – awaiting public hearing			

I urge you to contact my office with any questions or concerns you have about state government so I can better represent you during the 2017 legislative session.

I always appreciate hearing your comments, opinions, and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-4302. You may also email me at denny.hoskins@senate.mo.gov.