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**Higher Education, Vice Chair
Subcommittee on Student Debt Relief
Joint Committee on Education
Veterans
Special Committee on Employment Security
NCSL Military and Veterans Affairs Task Force**



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**Capitol Report
January 4th, 2018**

The 99th Missouri General Assembly, Second Session convened yesterday. As I mentioned last week, 2017 played host to some very historic events in Missouri. Now, in 2018, the new year brings more topics to the table including approval of measures to cut bureaucratic red tape, lessen the regulatory burden on families and businesses, and advance policy changes that will provide more educational opportunities to young people in all parts of the state. Following are some highlights of the first week.

2018 Legislative Session Begins

As we began session Wednesday, we heard from House Speaker Todd Richardson who encouraged us to continue the work we have already undertaken to make the great state of Missouri even greater. As Richardson said in his speech, “That is why it is critical for those of us in our final session, and for those who will pick up the torch when we are gone, to make it our focus in everything we do to leave this state a better place than we found it.”

Richardson used his speech to highlight the accomplishments of the legislature during his time in office. As he pointed out, in recent years the General Assembly has been able to pass the first income tax cut in nearly a century; and made it clear the state is open for business by passing Right-to-Work, making the state’s legal environment fairer for both employees and employers, and taking steps to eliminate bureaucratic red tape.

Richardson also noted the legislature has fought for the core values that are important to Missouri families by “giving their children better opportunities to have the kind of educational experience that will prepare them for success.” Richardson said lawmakers have also worked to promote pro-life policies that protect the lives of the innocent unborn and the health of the mother; and defend and strengthen the gun ownership rights of law-abiding Missourians.

The Speaker then praised his colleagues for working together to create higher ethical standards to raise the level of accountability and trust in state government, and to strengthen the integrity of our democratic process by ensuring that elections are fair and accurate. Richardson said lawmakers have also made it clear that “the brave men and women who keep us safe will have our support.”

Looking ahead to the weeks to come in the 2018 session, the Speaker said he hopes lawmakers will continue to work to pass impactful ethics reform, and increase the level of trust and accountability between the citizens and their citizen legislators. He called on his colleagues to once again stand up for the working families across the state so that they and future generations can look forward to a more prosperous Missouri.

Speaker Richardson said the legislature has work to do so the session can be remembered as one that led to greater freedom for young Missourians seeking the education that will serve them best. As the Speaker said, the legislature must make the “state a place where everyone has the opportunity to build a great life for themselves no matter where they were born or what their parents did for a living.”

The Speaker said the legislature must also take action to help the many Missourians who must now fight through unfair and cumbersome regulations to offer a simple service such as braiding hair to provide for themselves and their

families. He called on his colleagues to work this session to break down barriers for those Missourians who would bring innovation and economic opportunity to the state.

Speaker Richardson ended his comments asking his colleagues to “join together in service and good faith for the people of Missouri, so that each distinguished member of this House can one day look back during his or her final session and say that this chamber, this government, and our great state are better off than ever before.”

House Plans to Work Quickly to Pass Priority Legislation

House leaders made it clear on the opening day of session that they plan to work quickly to pass several priority pieces of legislation. The House is set to take up three pieces of legislation that have received strong bipartisan approval in the past. While these bills made it through the House, they did not receive Senate approval before time ran out on the 2017 session. Lawmakers hope this year to move all three measures across the legislative finish line:

- **Human Trafficking (HB 1246)** - House members will work again this year to address the growing problem of human trafficking. The state is currently ranked 20th in reported human trafficking cases according to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. Lawmakers hope to build on past efforts to address the trafficking problem by passing legislation that would make Missourians better aware of the resources available to assist victims of trafficking. The bill would require the Department of Public Safety to develop a poster to promote the use of the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline. The posters would be displayed at common areas where human trafficking can occur such as hotels or motels that have been cited for prostitution, and train and bus stations.
- **Ethics Reform (HB 1303)** - House members will also work to once again pass legislation meant to diminish the influence of lobbyists. Similar to legislation the House has passed in each of the last two sessions, the bill would ban gifts from lobbyists to legislators and other statewide elected officials. Missouri currently has no limits on lobbyist gifts. The bill House members will work to pass will create a gift ban with some common sense exceptions that would allow a legislator to receive an award or accept flowers for the funeral of a loved one without breaking the law.
- **Reducing Burdensome Regulations (HB 1500)** - In the first weeks of session, House members will also work to cut burdensome red tape and reduce government overregulation so that businesses can thrive in Missouri. Legislators will look at the issues faced by hair braiders in Missouri as they currently must obtain a cosmetology license that requires 1,500 hours of training that is not relevant to the practice of braiding. In comparison, a real estate agent needs only 72 hours of training, and an emergency medical technician needs only 100 to be licensed. House members will work to again pass legislation to specify that hair braiders do not have to obtain a cosmetology license in order to earn a living. The bill would require individuals engaging in braiding to register with the State Board of Cosmetology and Barber Examiners. No education or training would be required to register, except that the hair braider would need to complete a self-test on infection control techniques and diseases of the scalp.

My Filed Bills For 2018

Over the past few weeks, I have shared with you several of my ideas for legislation this coming session. As of today, I have officially filed eight bills. Also, I may file a few additional bills, as time progresses.

Currently, my filed bills are as follows: (You may click on the bill number for more information)

[HB 1503](#) – Veteran Small Business Loans

Establishes a fund for providing state-guaranteed small business loans to veterans.

[HB 1528](#) – American Civics Exam in Higher Education

Requires students at public and private institutions of higher education to pass an examination on the provisions and principals of American civics as a condition of graduation

[HB 1860](#) – State Board of Education Term Limits

Reduces terms of office for members of the state board of education from eight years to four years and prohibits members from serving more than eight years on the board (this requires a constitutional change, so this is the statutory change is the measure for a constitutional change is approved by a vote of the people)

[HB 1861](#) – Superintendent Contracts

Requires superintendents and assistant superintendents to be employed by school districts only by written contracts with certain provisions

HB 1941 – School Board Member Training

Modifies provisions related to training of school board members

HB 1942 – Campus Protection Officers

Allows institutions of higher education to designate one or more faculty or staff members as campus protection officers

HCR 53 – Ghost Army from WWII

Urges Congress to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the Ghost Army from WWII

HJR 66 – State Board of Education Term Limits

Proposes a constitutional amendment to reduce the terms of office for members of the state board of education from eight-year terms to four-year terms (this is constitutional change, so this is the ballot measure for a vote by the people)

State of the State Address

Governor Greitens will deliver the 2018 State of the State Address at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, January 10 in the House of Representatives Chamber at the Missouri State Capitol. In the address, the governor will discuss the current condition of Missouri as a state and may discuss job growth, economic outlook and forecasts, among several other topics important to the well-being of the state.

A live-stream of the message will be available at mo.gov

It is an honor to serve the 51st District in the Missouri House of Representatives. Each week I will issue a capitol report to keep you informed of activities in Jefferson City. Any concerns or issues you might have are of great interest to me. I look forward to your input and thoughts, so please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions, concerns, or ideas to improve our state government and the quality of life for all Missourians. My telephone number is 573-751-2204 or you may contact me by email at dean.dohrman@house.mo.gov. Thank you for working with me to make Missouri a great place to live.

Serving the Constituents of the 51st District,



State Representative

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