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Senator Doug Libla's Capitol Report

MARCH 14TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Senator Doug Libla's Capitol Report

Recently, the Missouri Senate debated several meaningful pieces of legislation that are sure to not only bring high paying jobs, but also protect countless Missouri children. Two of those bills were top priorities of mine for the 2018 legislative session, Senate Bill 894 and Senate Bill 800 were bills I filed, and both were passed.

Senate Bill 894 establishes new computer science standards to include coding and programming along with guidelines designed for K-12 schools. This will encourage more Missouri students to study computer science by allowing the course to count toward high school graduation. Computer science job skills are in demand across our state and country. This program will teach our youth the skills they need for the 21st century job market. The bill also creates a certification program for computer science teachers as well as introduces an online program that showcases STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) careers and their impact on today's economy.

Senate Bill 800 shortens the length of time a child spends in foster care. Under the current system, there can be a lag between when a petition to terminate parental rights is filed and when an adoption petition is filed. Senate Bill 800 allows both the petition for adoption and the petition to terminate parental rights to be filed together. The journey for many of our children in Missouri's current foster care system takes far too long. Sadly, many of the delays are caused by prolonged legal proceedings. Statics indicate that older children are less likely to be adopted than younger children. I am hopeful this bill will become law this year, and help these children find their way into loving forever homes, as quickly as possible.

After some debate, Senate Bill 800 and Senate Bill 894, were approved and sent to the Missouri House of Representatives for final approval. The Missouri General Assembly will take a one-week spring break beginning March 19th. Upon returning, bills and proposals will begin to move quickly through the legislative process before the end of the legislative session.

More great news, Magnitude 7 Metals plans to bring many good paying jobs back to our area. The opening of the new aluminum smelter gives New Madrid County and the Bootheel hope that better times are ahead. Some of the poorest counties in Missouri are in the Bootheel and these quality, high paying jobs will greatly benefit the community.

I welcome you to visit your State Capitol and stop by our office (room 219), or call (573-751-4843) with any questions, concerns or comments you may have. I am honored to serve the citizens of the 25th District.

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