

Local candidates speak about SB749

The candidates for District Three State Representative go head-to-head with their views about the contraception bill override
BY ANDI WATKINS DAVIS

Rebecca McClanahan (Democrat)

Q. What is your position on the veto for Senate Bill 749 being overturned by the Missouri congress?

A. Senate Bill 749 didn't really do anything differently than has been in Missouri law for more than 10 years. The one thing it did was expand the discretion of insurance companies just a bit more, but it didn't really speak to anything related to religious liberty that isn't already in state law.

Q. What do you think this bill will mean for District Three?

A. I don't think it will do anything for the people of House District Three because it really is virtually a complete repetition of what is already in the law. What this has done is just empower insurance companies just a bit more to make decisions or, really, to deny care.

Q. Do you think it is important for people in District Three to be informed about this issue?

A. I do. I guess the one concern I have is that it will create more skepticism and increase the level of cynicism among voters here. So I just hope that people understand that it doesn't help them in any way in expressing their religious liberty, any more than it would to allow insurance companies to restrict coverage for a blood transfusion. You know, there are several hundred Missourians a year, I suppose, that turn down a blood transfusion because of religious concerns. They exercise their religious liberty in choosing not to receive treatment. So I really don't see that as any different than desiring to have contraception. And of course many of the hormonal contraceptives are used for health reasons other than to prevent pregnancies. So it really allows insurance companies to deny health care to women.

Q. If you are elected, do you have any plans to work on issues



specifically related to birth control or health care?

A. Well, I'm a nurse by profession. So health care and access to health care and the coverage for health care are central to my concerns as a person and as a legislator. They're not the only concerns... but health care issues are something I believe are very important and I think this next general assembly here in Missouri will have very, very important decisions to make that will have to do with health and that, because of the amount of money involved, will significantly effect the economy, businesses and health care providers all over the state.

Nate Walker (Republican)

Q. What is your position on the veto for Senate Bill 749 being overturned by the Missouri congress?

A. I would have supported the override if I was in the legislature. It was a bipartisan override and all the legislators in North and Northeast Missouri, both Republican and Democrat, supported the override.

Q. What do you think this bill will mean for District Three?

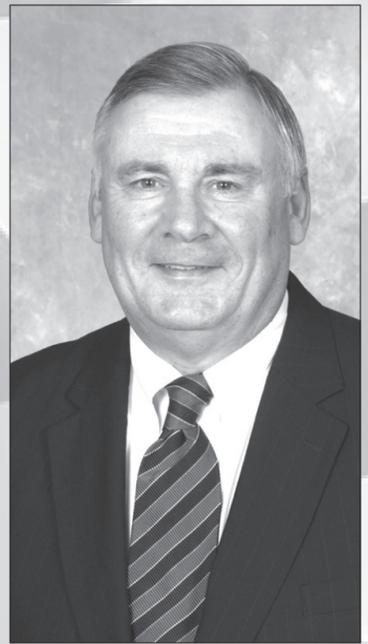
A. I think this bill is about protecting our religious liberties and it is also about protecting businesses from the overreach of government. Traveling throughout the district the last few weeks, it was overwhelmingly that people wanted to see this bill overridden and it was bipartisan also. Missouri people tend to feel very strongly about these kinds of issues, particularly religious freedoms.

Q. Do you think it is important for people in District Three to be informed about this issue?

A. I think the people in the Third District are informed about this bill and they need to be about any bill or any type of legislation that is presented. And I think they very much were because as I traveled throughout the district over the last few weeks people brought this up to me as something that they hoped would be overridden. And it was, by a large majority.

Q. If you are elected, do you have any plans to work on issues specifically related to birth control or health care?

A. Right now I'm going to focus on working on things that I think are the priorities of the district and that's the economy, getting jobs for our citizens



and for our college students that are graduating from Truman and other institutions, and to work toward eliminating the rules and regulations that are hindering the business community. Those are my priorities, and also work towards ways to get better education and funding for Truman and higher education and also secondary education.

For more information on the contraception bill, SB749, override, check out page 1



Ryan Barker, director of health policy at the Missouri Foundation for Health, gives a presentation about the Affordable Care Act Tuesday afternoon in the Mehegan classroom at A.T. Still University's campus. The presentation discussed health care reform and allowed audience members to ask questions and voice concerns about the changes.

Council signs new texting proclamation

City Council proclamation makes Wednesday a 'no texting while driving' day across Kirksville

BY ASHLEY JOST
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City Council presented an official proclamation during their meeting Monday afternoon that established yesterday as "No Text on Board — Pledge Day."

The proclamation encouraged residents to avoid using cell phones while driving, especially texting, mayor Richard Detweiler said.

Detweiler said this was a Council-wide decision after years of city manager Mari Macomber bringing newspaper clippings and other reports to the Council about people being seriously injured or dying from texting while driving. He said during the last few years, the number of clips became so large that the Council decided to act.

"There's been an effort made across the state and federal levels to cut down on the people who are texting [while driving]," Detweiler said. "We figured we needed to do our part."

Detweiler said there isn't a specific age group this proclamation is focusing on, as anyone can be guilty of using their phones while they drive.

He said it took about 50 years and thousands of deaths to get society to change their minds about how bad drinking and driving is, and now society needs to ask how far it's willing to let the current dilemma with technology go before they realize using phones while driving essentially the same.

Texting while driving is not illegal for those older than 21, according to Missouri Statute 304.820 regarding traffic regulations. The statute indicates that "no person 21-years-old or younger who is driving a motor vehicle on the highway can send, read or write a text message or electronic message."

Steve Farnsworth, Kirksville Police Department lieutenant, said officers do not pull people over for texting and driving, as it's not technically illegal.

"If you were in a bad accident with injuries, we could subpoena your phone records, and if you're texting at the time, that could add to the crime and could be counted as negligence," Farnsworth said.

Junior Amy Soto said she tries to avoid texting while driving at all times, as tempting as it can be.

"I won't text someone if I know they're driving," Soto said. "If I'm driving, I try and have a text that just says 'driving' to send so people know I can't really respond."

During 2009, 1,780 of the 152,995 crashes across Missouri were related to cell phone usage, according to the Missouri State Highway Patrol website. During the first half of 2010, at least 791 of the undetermined total number of crashes were related to phone use, and caused eight deaths and 239 injuries.

"If you're driving, just drive," Detweiler said. "I realize when you're young you feel like you can do everything, and 99 percent of the time I think you can. But [it's] that one percent of the time that could get somebody hurt or worse."

Groups provides insight to Affordable Care Act impact

BY ANDI WATKINS DAVIS
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Two free presentations about the Affordable Care Act occurred Tuesday at the Gutensohn Clinic in Kirksville.

The presentations were hosted by the Northeast Missouri Rural Health Network and the Missouri Foundation for Health. The first presentation was geared toward health care providers and professionals and the second presentation was intended for the general public.

Glenna Daniels Young, NEMO Rural Health Network executive director, said the goal of the presentation was to inform Adair County residents about the Act and its impact.

Ryan Barker, director of health policy for the Missouri Foundation for Health, said the organization has hosted about 180 Affordable Care Act presentations across the state since the summer of 2010. The presentation was previously hosted in Adair County during summer 2011, aiming to educate Missourians

about what is in the Act, Barker said. "A lot of people are really interested to know, fact-wise, what's in the law," Barker said.

The presentation lasted an hour and was followed by a question-and-answer section. Topics covered during the event included the Supreme Court ruling regarding the Act, the major themes of the Act, the individual mandate and the impact on Medicare. It also included a section about health insurance exchanges and discussion about how the Act will affect large and small businesses.

Barker said one of the most important aspects of the Act is the way it will impact health insurance options for citizens.

Some of the biggest areas of concern for citizens involve how the Act will impact Medicare and what businesses will need to do to implement the law, Barker said.

Daniels Young said both events had a good turnout with 149 people at the first presentation and 81 at the second. About 40 of the 81 people at the evening event were Truman State students.

Barker said college-aged students are one of the most difficult demographic areas to engage. The most successful way the organization has found to reach this age group is through guest-speaker lectures in college classrooms.

"It's just an issue that a lot of young people don't necessarily think about because they've always maybe been on their parents' insurance or maybe their family has been uninsured," Barker said.

He said it is important for college students to understand how the Act will affect them, including the option for students to stay on their parents' insurance plan until age 26 and how to obtain health insurance on their own.

Junior David Lanza said he attended the event for a class, but thinks it is important to be informed about the Act.

"[College students] are part of a vulnerable population," Lanza said. "A lot of college students aren't insured."

He said it is important for students to know how to get insurance and what type of insurance is best for them when the time comes to purchase insurance on their own.

Rose Sparks/Index