



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
RICK BRATTIN
124TH DISTRICT



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Last week at the State Capitol we passed our first full piece of legislation, HB 45. This legislation was aimed directly at small businesses in Missouri. In fact, through the committee process and on the floor we heard that there are over 100,000 small businesses in the Show Me state and employees in those businesses account for 60% of employment. Those numbers just go to show how important entrepreneurs and everyday Missourians are to our economy.

The primary function of HB 45 was to incentivize small businesses to hire new people and grow their businesses. For instance, we extended the definition of a small business by taking it from 25 employees to 50 employees. We also extended a tax deduction for these new small businesses if they hire new employees at the average annual county wage and doubled it if they also offer to pay for 50% of the new employee's healthcare benefits. In total the value of the deduction is \$10,000 per new employee hired or \$20,000 per new employee if they offer the benefits.

However, perhaps the most important provision in the bill stated that any new rules, fees, or mandates passed by the federal government must first be approved by our general assembly.

We believe this overall philosophy in creating a stronger business climate is key to turning our state around and getting back on our feet economically. As a matter of fact this simple solution was a stark contrast to what the Governor outlined in his State of the State address. Gov. Nixon attempted to focus more on making tweaks, slight changes, or consolidate existing programs instead of make significant strides to change the actual business climate.

We understand there are a lot of difficult decisions to make in state government and the Governor is at the forefront of making a lot of them, but this philosophical difference will probably be a key point of dissention of how we decide to improve the job creation climate in the state of Missouri. Especially considering that our state's unemployment rate is 9.5% and many surrounding states have a lower rate.

We have to be willing to make bold decisions and lead by example, that's why we were elected. We started off with a great bill to encourage entrepreneurs to hire new employees and create a more stable and fair business climate for the state of Missouri. These are the kind of decisions we want to continue to lead with as we continue through the rest of the legislative session.

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