

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, July 16, 2008

Contact: Chris Roepe
816-294-0497

Pearce Praises Law to Aid Military Families with Education Needs

BELTON _David Pearce serves as vice chairman of the Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission today praised legislation that will ease the transition from one school to another for the children of military members.

Pearce, a state representative from Warrensburg, today briefed the commission on the new legislation to provide educational grants for family members of Missouri's military heroes and helps ease the transition for military children from one school to another as their parents are transferred.

"I have worked with our brave folks in uniform and have gotten to know their families, so I understand how important it is to reduce the stress it puts on young people who so often have to move from one school to another," Pearce said. "This legislation will go a long way in reducing that stress while at the same time recognizing our military personnel for the sacrifices they make every day to protect our nation. This legislation also provides additional educational assistance to help those young people who move so often so their parents can serve our country so well."

The bill also will improve coordination between the Missouri Veterans Commission and the Commission that Pearce serves on as vice chairman; allow a military dependent who has completed an accredited pre-kindergarten or kindergarten program in another state to enter kindergarten or first grade even if the child has not reached the required age for Missouri schools by August 1; requires the state Board of Education to establish a rule allowing the spouse of a military member who holds a teacher's certificate in another state to be issued a provisional teacher's certificate before the completion of a background check; and allows school districts to accept a course in government completed in another state when a student transfers to a Missouri high school to satisfy the state's graduation requirement.

The bill also renames the Guard at Home Program the Hero at Home Program and extends the coverage to the first year after discharge from deployment, to cover Reservists, and to cover situations in which an individual cannot return to his or her previous employment; and specifies that military service and out-of-state employment by itself is not sufficient to justify a modification of a child custody visitation order.

Pearce is a Republican Candidate for State Senate in the 31st District, which includes Cass, Johnson, Bates and Vernon Counties.

###