



**Capitol Report**  
**Rep. T.J. Berry**  
**District 38**  
**Clay County**



August 19, 2016

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Often I hear people complaining about how difficult life is and how the other party is crazy. Democrat or Republican--it does not matter which tribe--the other one is insane. It is very easy to fall into that kind of thinking. I can say that I've fallen into that trap occasionally. Today I'd like to share with you a poem by Edgar Albert Guest, "It Couldn't Be Done":

***Somebody said that it couldn't be done  
 But he with a chuckle replied  
 That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one  
 Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.  
 So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin  
 On his face. If he worried he hid it.  
 He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
 That couldn't be done, and he did it!***

***Somebody scoffed:" Oh, you'll never do that;  
 At least no one has ever done it";  
 But he took off his coat and he took off his hat  
 And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.  
 With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,  
 Without any doubting or quiddit,  
 He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
 That couldn't be done and he did it.***

***There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,  
 There are thousands to prophesy failure;  
 There are thousands to point out to you, one by one,  
 The dangers that wait to assail you.  
 But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,  
 Just take off your coat and go to it;  
 Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing  
 That "cannot be done," and you'll do it.***

This political season while one party is screaming at the other, try to remember this poem. We can do better and we shall do better. We are Missourians. We have the "can do" attitude that helped build this country. The problems we face are solvable if we are honest with one another.

So please quit watching the T.V. and listening to the radio, and try talking with someone who has a different point of view. Try to find common ground on which you can build and, like the poem says, "Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing / that 'cannot be done' " and we will do it!!

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### **Expungement of Some Criminal Records (SB 588)**

Another bill approved by the General Assembly this year is meant to allow former offenders who have paid their dues and become law-abiding citizens to put their past behind them. The bill will allow some Missourians with criminal histories to petition the court to close their criminal records from the public. The goal is to allow these men and women to get back on their feet and obtain gainful employment.

Senate Bill 588 expands the types of offenses that are eligible for expungement. It also allows individuals to seek expungement sooner, and also eases the burden of proof for individuals petitioning the court for expungement. The bill will still require individuals to prove they have no other misdemeanors or felony adjudications since they completed their sentence or probation, have paid their fines and restitution, and have no pending charges.

Additionally, the bill will allow some records to become closed to the public but still accessible to law enforcement agencies and employers that are entitled to that information under state or federal law. The goal is to have a balance that allows some Missourians with a criminal past to rehabilitate and become productive members of society while also ensuring that law enforcement has access to the information necessary to ensure public safety.

The provisions of the bill are set to take effect on January 1, 2018.

All the best, in your service,



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