



NEWS

Missouri House of Representatives

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Speaker Pro Tem Carl Bearden Resigns

Career Highlighted by Strong Fiscal Management of Public Funds

July 12, 2007, St. Charles, MO – Today, after 15 years of public service that were marked by a steadfast commitment to sound budget oversight and tenacious leadership skills, Missouri House of Representatives Speaker Pro Tem Carl Bearden announced that he is resigning his elected office, effective at 11:59pm on July 12, 2007.

“My top priority has always been to make sure that the interests of the people and businesses of St. Charles County are being tended to,” said Bearden. “It has been my honor and privilege to work with, and on behalf of, some of Missouri’s best and brightest business and civic leaders. As I look forward to pursuing other interests in the private sector, I leave the House knowing that St. Charles County and our State are in a much stronger position fiscally and economically.”

Bearden was first elected to office as St. Charles County Councilman in 1992 and immediately displayed a talent for responsible management of public funds. Under his leadership as the Council’s first Chairman, the County successfully secured an \$11 million budget surplus within four years and an almost \$8 million reduction in taxes the following year.

The success of these fiscal policies led the County to receive an "AA" bond rating from Standard and Poor’s. Only 20 counties in the United States had this rating during the same time period. Bearden's leadership contributed to the growing economic strength of St. Charles County and to statewide recognition as a major player in the St. Louis region and the state.

Elected to the Missouri House in November 2000, Bearden's fiscal skills were rewarded with an appointment to the state Budget Committee, a rare appointment for a freshman legislator, where he led the fight to protect services to the most needy while reigning in unnecessary tax increases and unnecessarily dipping into the state’s rainy day fund.

In his second term in the House, he was appointed to serve as Budget Chairman and led the effort to balance Missouri’s \$19 billion state budget through increased efficiency and elimination of waste, fraud, and abuse. He stood firm in his positions against unnecessary tax increases that would have driven Missouri jobs to neighboring states and in support of the largest education budget in state history up to that time. His revenue projections were shown to be the most accurate of any made during the same period.

Bearden was elected Speaker Pro Tem of the Missouri House in January 2005. He was the presiding officer of the House for the majority of the 93rd General Assembly and provided leadership that guided several key issues through to successful passage, including tort reform, Worker's Compensation reform, the Successful Schools Funding Model, and eminent domain reform.

His leadership and success were carried through to the 94th General Assembly where he was once again elected Speaker Pro Tem. The 94th General Assembly saw the passage of pro-life legislation that provides additional protection and information to women as well as addressing sex education in schools, Social Security tax cuts for seniors, higher education reform leading to increased access to student need based loans for the middle class, state provided health care reform, improved economic development opportunities to continue the robust economy in Missouri, and letting the citizens of Missouri decide whether they want English to be the language of official proceedings in the state.

"I thank Speaker Jetton, former Speaker Hanaway, and my fellow Republican caucus members for their leadership, their vision, and their commitment to commonsense Missouri values," Bearden said.

While recognized as a positive force and one of the leading House Republicans, he was able to cross party lines and maintain positive relationships with a large number of Democrats. Those efforts included his support of Charter reform for the City of St. Louis, support of various initiatives proposed by Mayor Slay, a continuation of the relationship that began when the Mayor was president of the Board of Aldermen and working closely with Democrat Representatives Rodney Hubbard, Ted Hoskins, Talibdan El-Amin, Terry Young and Curt Dougherty, Senator Jeff Smith and others on public education reform.

"By working together, we have laid the groundwork for continued growth and progress in this state," Bearden said. "I am confident that my colleagues and successors will keep making Missouri a better place to live, work, and raise our families."

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