



# Senator Jeff Longbine

SENATE DISTRICT 17



## Contact Jeff

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## ABOUT JEFF

A fourth-generation Kansan, Jeff Longbine grew up in the 17th District and studied business at Emporia State University. Jeff owns and operates the family business, Longbine Autoplaza, in Emporia. He has been active as the local chamber president, a city commissioner and mayor. Jeff was elected to the Kansas Senate in 2010. Jeff and his wife Gwen have three children.

## Getting us back to basics

Dear Friends,

As the Legislative Session wraps up, I want to thank you for your continued feedback and engagement in the process. As you know, this Session had its share of challenges. We saw legislation introduced anonymously so that no one would know where the bill came from. We saw hearings where no one spoke in favor of a bill but the committee still passed it. And, we saw major legislation put up for a last-minute vote without first giving legislators a bill to read.

There are frustrations to be sure. However, I am encouraged by the growing group of committed lawmakers that I am working with to stand up against these practices and get our state back to basics.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

– MARGARET MEAD

This year, we successfully fought for stronger controls in the state budget, implemented a plan to protect the privacy and identity of our youngest citizens, and passed significant reforms to reduce juvenile crime. We also made significant progress toward strengthening the democratic process, including prohibiting government officials from using secret emails to conduct the public’s business and requiring that legislative hearings be live-streamed online so that the public has access to listen in.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you. You sent me to Topeka to fight for our priorities and to stand up for an open and transparent process. With your support, that’s what I’ll keep doing. Working together, we can get our state back to basics. As always, I welcome your feedback, your ideas and your questions.

# LEGISLATURE IMPLEMENTS STRICTER BUDGET CONTROLS

*Votes to override Governor on Docking, STAR Bonds actions*

Jeff Longbine helped push for stricter budgeting and debt controls when it comes to management of the state's finances. This year, the Senate approved a set of four reforms intended to ensure adequate checks and balances in the use of taxpayer dollars.

Among the reforms Longbine supported:

## **Establishing a Budget Stabilization Fund**

Senate Bill 509 would establish a budget stabilization fund in the state treasury. Kansas is one of only four states that does not maintain a risk-based reserve fund. This type of fund is designed to serve as a safety net, protecting essential services in the state budget in the event of unexpected shortfalls or emergencies.

## **Creating Performance Based Budgeting**

House Bill 2739 calls for the state to develop a revised budget process, implementing what's known as performance-based budgeting. Under performance-based budgeting, state agencies are required to prepare a program service inventory, which allows for programs to be prioritized and more fully evaluated for cost-effectiveness.

## **Implementing Stricter Regulation of STAR Bonds**

House Bill 2632 establishes stricter regulations in the Sales Tax and Revenue (STAR) Financing Act. Specifically, it defines eligible districts; provides flexibility for the Secretary of Commerce to pledge only a portion of state sales tax revenues to the STAR Bond district rather

than being required to pledge all sales tax revenues; and requires the Department of Commerce to provide a full accounting of the STAR Bonds program to the Legislature each year. Longbine also voted to override the Governor's veto of stronger STAR Bond regulation. The veto override passed the Senate on a 30-8 vote.

## **Blocking Financing Deal & Demolition of Docking**

Longbine voted to override Governor Brownback on Senate Bill 250. Earlier in the Session, it was discovered that the Administration had entered into a \$20 million financing deal without legislative approval. Senate Bill 250 would have blocked the state from moving forward with the financing deal to demolish Docking State Office Building. The override failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority.

## *Issues Impacting Our Families*

### **SECURING THE PRIVACY OF STUDENTS**

Jeff supported enactment of the Student Online Personal Protection Act, which protects the privacy of Kansas students and prohibits vendors who operate online educational products from using private student information.

### **NEXT STEP IN THE SCHOOL FUNDING CASE**

Senate Substitute for House Bill 2655 was crafted to address equity concerns in school block grants. Jeff supported the bill as a means to hold our schools harmless on funding while the Gannon school finance case continues to be tried.

### **PRESERVING PARENTAL RIGHTS**

Jeff helped pass Simon's Law, which protects parental rights and requires written consent from parents before a doctor can place Do Not Resuscitate orders on a child's medical chart. The bill is named in memory Simon Crosier, a Missouri infant.

## Ensuring the safety and security of our senior care homes

The Legislature implemented new standards and stronger background checks for nursing homes, residential treatment centers, psychiatric hospitals, community mental health centers and other facilities licensed by the Kansas Department of Aging & Disabilities. Under this legislation, the licensing and inspection process will become more streamlined, in addition to providing enhanced protections in the enforcement process.

The new standards are designed to promote safety and security for Kansans being cared for in both public and private facilities.

Jeff Longbine supported the changes, which include more extensive criminal background checks on providers. Under the requirements, persons with felony convictions and crimes involving controlled substances, sex offenses and abuse or neglect would be prohibited from working in licensed care facilities.

## *Longbine pushes for increased transparency, accountability*

After media reports uncovered that private emails were being used – on both the state and national level – to conduct taxpayer business, the Legislature took action to ensure transparency in the public's business.

### **No More Secret Emails**

Longbine supported Substitute for SB 22, which specifies that any emails sent by government officials regarding public business – regardless of whether a public or private email account is being used – will be subject to the Kansas Open Records Act. The law does not apply to private citizens and their emails.

### **Disclosure of Judicial Applicants**

Longbine also supported a bill that will make the Court of Appeals selection process more transparent. Substitute for SB 440 requires that the names of applicants for vacancies on the Kansas Court of Appeals be publicly disclosed. The bill also addresses issues regarding separation of powers in the Solomon case.

## **KEEPING GITMO DETAINEES OUT OF KANSAS**



The Legislature passed a resolution urging President Obama to keep GITMO detainees out of Kansas. Jeff Longbine supported the resolution, citing that the proximity of NBAF, Fort Riley and the military generals college at Fort Leavenworth could make Kansas an unnecessary target for terrorists.

## **PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO HUNT AND FISH**

The Legislature approved a Constitutional amendment to preserve the right of citizens to hunt, fish and trap. If approved by the voters in November, this provision will be added to the Kansas Constitution. Jeff voted in favor of the amendment.

## **REFORMING JUVENILE JUSTICE**

Jeff supported reform of the state's juvenile justice system. Under the reforms, lower-risk offenders will be able to undergo therapies, restitution and rehabilitation closer to home and away from higher-risk offenders where they may be poorly influenced.

## **INCREASING PATROL ON KANSAS HIGHWAYS**

Kansas highways will be more adequately patrolled under a new funding bill that allows for the hiring of 75 additional troopers. Jeff voted for the plan, which also helps fund training needs and upgrades at the state's law enforcement training center.



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## CONTACT JEFF

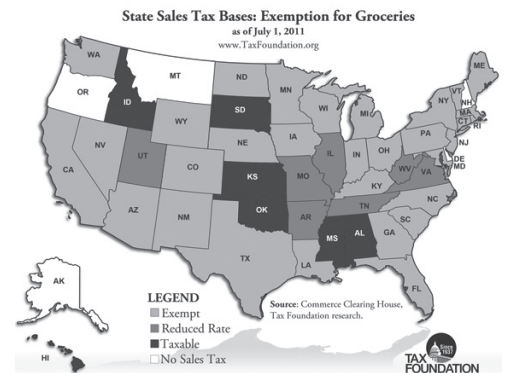
I look forward to hearing from you. Please contact me if I may answer any questions about bills from this Session, if you have ideas for legislation that should be considered next year, or if I may assist you with any concerns involving a state agency.

You may reach me personally at (620) 342-2744 or email me at [Jeff.Longbine@senate.ks.gov](mailto:Jeff.Longbine@senate.ks.gov).

## LONGBINE SUPPORTS PLAN TO ELIMINATE SALES TAX ON FOOD

Jeff Longbine supported a plan to phase out the sales tax on food in Kansas. Kansas is one of only seven states that does not exempt or offer a reduced sales tax rate on groceries. Instead, the sales tax on groceries increased for Kansans this year under Governor Brownback's sales tax hike.

Longbine, who voted against the Governor's sales tax increase, said Concurrent Resolution 1612 was one way to help mitigate the burden created for seniors and families, and bring Kansas in line with grocery sales tax rates in other states.



The Concurrent Resolution would have phased out the sales tax on food in Kansas starting with a reduced rate of 4% in 2017; then 2% in 2018; and 0% in 2019. Longbine, along with 20 other senators, voted in favor of the resolution. However, it failed on a vote of 21-19, requiring a two-thirds majority vote for passage.