

Four legislative priorities announced by Great Northwest Day's planning committee
News

Posted by : John

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As legislators are gearing up for a new season in Jefferson City, so to are the citizens of Northwest Missouri. Over the past few months, the Great Northwest Day at the Capitol Steering Committee gathered and prioritized legislative issues for the region's annual visit to the state capitol city on February 5-6, 2013.

At this event, approximately 350 people from the 18-county region will visit Jefferson City to make their regional voice heard in a single, cohesive message. Great Northwest Day's legislative platform for the upcoming event includes the following priorities:

Drought Mitigation and Response: Northwest Missouri continues to be impacted by a significant drought event. The lack of adequate rainfall has not only damaged the local agriculture economy, but is beginning to threaten public water supplies, particularly those that rely on shallow ground-water wells or small surface reservoirs. We encourage the Missouri Legislature to expand programs designed to provide access to affordable, abundant water in times of drought or other water emergency.

Transportation Infrastructure and Funding: The Missouri Legislature must work together to build a stronger, more viable economy in northwest Missouri, and a sound transportation network is key to achieving this objective. A reliable transportation system is essential for the distribution of goods and services, increased socio-economic opportunities, improved mobility, the delivery of labor, and emergency response. It also creates a stronger competitive base from which to grow and attract businesses to northwest Missouri. We encourage the Missouri Legislature to consider initiatives that support these needs.

Economic Development: Economic Development is a vital effort in supporting and enhancing the general financial health of our communities. GNW supports the proposed "Compete Missouri Legislation" which will provide enhanced tools for our communities to retain and attract businesses. We additionally support efforts to properly balance the rules dealing with Environmental Assessments for projects and Enhanced Enterprise Zones to enable smaller communities to compete effectively without undue regulatory red tape.

K-12 and Higher Education Funding: Adequate and sustained funding of our public educational institutions is a keystone to the success of our region. The core and capital needs of our educational institutions are at a critical point and we support the legislature attending to these needs. We also support the adoption of a proposed higher education funding formula which is fair and balanced for our local institutions.

The criteria for reviewing regional issues included legislative impact, overarching regional impact, non-partisan perspective and timeliness of concern. Local issues were collected by County Coordinators and then compiled by a volunteer committee. Those issues were then regionally defined and sent back to County Coordinators and the steering committee for additional input before being established as Legislative Priorities for the event. The four priorities will be monitored as Great Northwest Day nears, and the message to legislators will be further refined during that time.

Great Northwest Day at the Capitol is an annual legislative event that includes introduction on the Missouri House and Senate floors, time with legislators, an educational luncheon, and an evening event inviting all of Missouri's legislators and department heads to meet with citizens from the Northwest Missouri region.

For more information on the event or how you can attend, contact the Grundy County Coordinator,

Ralph Boots at (660) 359-4310, or visit the website at www.greatnorthwestday.com.