

# Guest Editorial

(Owen/Grant/Scott)

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Commonwealth of Kentucky  
Senator  
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## Report from Frankfort

**Frankfort** – The Senate concentrated on family issues this week.

We passed a Senate Committee Substitute to House Bill 344 which will permanently erase partial public financing of elections from our books. The popularly termed “welfare for politicians” is a waste of much needed tax-payer dollars. Now more than ever, state funds are needed for education and human services – for our families – and not for campaign bumper stickers, fingernail files, and negative ads!

The Senate also passed Senate Bill 220 which will help equalize education funding from SEEK, the school funding formula. The bill requires equalization of all revenue sources in the formula by 2010. SB 220 also addresses the problem of limited English proficiency funding and transportation funding. SB 220 does not require any local tax increase. School districts may choose to either use the new formula or stay with the original SEEK funding. It’s simply a fairness issue.

Senate Joint Resolution 156 also passed this week with an overwhelming bipartisan vote. I co-sponsored this important bill which calls for the Office of Education Accountability to conduct an in-depth study of the Commonwealth Assessment Testing System (CATS). In discussions with teachers across the state, one theme became clear: the need to have a valid nationally standardized test that will measure individual student progress in a manner that will assist teachers without distracting from the learning process. Fourteen years have passed since the General Assembly voted on KERA. It is time to reassess the testing system to make sure we are doing the right thing for our students.

Senate Bill 102, which I co-sponsored, is also on its way to the House. With SB 102, law enforcement officers would be able to charge individuals with a felony who solicit minors over the Internet. Officers could also extradite them. Molesters will not be able to hide in other states when they threaten one of our children. This legislation was suggested by a sheriff in Northern Kentucky and I am always happy to help them make all of us safer.

I also co-sponsored Senate Bill 38 which was approved as well. SB 38 will smooth the path of foreign adoptions. It is no secret that I am strongly committed to the pro-life stance. Adoption is a loving option and should not be unreasonably complicated by bureaucracy.

In addition, Senate Bill 189 passed. It will help protect our most vulnerable citizens who reside in long-term care facilities. SB 189 prevents the employment of felons in these homes.

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Looking ahead, the Senate is now evaluating the House's budget proposal. I am determined that it reflect our district's values. The Senate should vote on the improved version by next week. Please let me know what areas are important to you. Call me anytime toll-free at 800/372-7181.

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Note: For a high-resolution .jpeg of Senator Thayer, please log onto [www.lrc.state.ky.us/pubinfo/epphoto.htm](http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/pubinfo/epphoto.htm).