Hayes Grove School

Pictured above are students from the Hayes Grove School taken either 1945 or 1046. Front row from left are: Duell Eades, James Franklin Miracle, Georgia Gatliff, and Mary Jane Anderkin. Second row from left: Marcellus Eads, Don Gatliff, Bonnie Anderkin, Martha Isaacs, Jean Anderkin, Loraine Huff and Ollie Wade Gatliff. Back row from left: Joe Bullens, Homer Brown, Donald Reese, Tommie Bullens, Bobbie Bullens, and James Anderkin, Jr. Lee Eads was absent from school the day the picture was taken. At left is Hayes Grove School teacher Jean Hiatt.

Legislative Update

From State Rep. Danny Ford

The first bill to complete favorable passage through the committee system of the 2000 Session was celebrated in a bill signing ceremony early in the sixth week of the General Assembly. While sponsors and others looked on in the Capitol Rotunda, House Bill 43 was signed by the Governor. The legislation is designated to enable and encourage the restoration of old hotels across the Commonwealth. This action will preserve much of our heritage and also provide needed accommodations for the growing tourism industry which will aid local economics.

At this point in the Session, legislative activity speeds up measurably due to the fact that bills are funnelling from each of the many legislative committees into the House and Senate chambers for consideration. The number of bills presented each day provided quite a variety of issues for us to review this week.

A Kentucky Homeless Veterans Program would be created by HB 295 passed late in the week. For basic administrative costs, this change will allow the state to draw from a $15 Million Federal grant program designed to assist the homeless veterans. Such funds would go a long way in helping the homeless veterans in Kentucky, thought to number between 2,000 and 3,000.

The passage of HB 127 would allow counties to dispose of personal or real property after stating the intended use of the property, the reasons for selling and the method of sale. Another property use issue, HB 131 would provide for the better use of abandoned schools and other public property. Schools and agencies would be required to notify the Kentucky Housing Corporation of facilities that may be considered for conversion into public or private housing. The reclassification of manufactured homes as real property through the passage of HB 348 will enable manufactured homes to be converted to real estate and financed as real property. This will give some property tax relief for manufactured home owners.

Effecting the education system, HB 157 would require public schools to include character education in student curriculum. The strategies to be developed by the Department of Education would be designed to help students become self-sufficient individuals and to learn to make good choices. HB 373 would permit a school district to establish a sick leave bank for both certified and classified employees, enabling them to share sick leave under specific conditions including leave time to deal with catastrophic loss to personal property. Child Advocacy Centers would be established under HB 237, which would provide for the development of staff and facility resources to investigate child abuse cases and conduct interviews with suspected child abuse victims.

Many of us met with the Governor this week for additional briefings on the proposed biennial budget. Some of the proposal would appear to be beneficial, while other aspects seem to bear further review. Though some citizens will benefit from lower income tax charges and some remain about even, those in the higher income ranges would be required to pay the higher calculation of two computations, either the standard method and an alternative tax method.

My larger concerns with the budget proposal, however, are on potential effects for individual taxpayers from the additional taxes proposed to increase state revenues. Taxing on those expenditures that are thought to be better areas for future revenue growth include excise taxes on communications; sales tax on selected services including car repairs, and a change that would allow the state to benefit from new property growth through the same procedure now used by city and county governments. While these measures would provide income for the General Fund Budget, the Kentucky Road Fund would benefit from any increased gas tax.

Though changes may be needed in the tax structure and revenue streams of the Commonwealth, support for the budget as presented does not seem to be very strong. I and other legislators are working on other proposals that would provide for the needs and services to meet the responsibilities you expect from your state government, while not placing undue burdens caused by more government expansion.

Please continue to share your thoughts, ideas and concerns with me at anytime. Your input is most important. Call me anytime, or you may leave a message toll-free by calling 1-800-372-7181.