

Bruce DeGroot

Missouri House District 101



Summary

Campaign Biography

Rep. Bruce DeGroot, a Republican, represents parts of St. Louis County, including Chesterfield, (District 101) in the Missouri House of Representatives. He was elected to his first two-year term in November 2016.

Immediately prior to assuming his office, Rep. DeGroot served as a councilman for the City of Chesterfield.

Rep. DeGroot is a former Trustee for the Chesterfield Farms Subdivision and has served as the Vice Chair and Secretary on the Planning Commission for the City of Chesterfield. He has also served on the Board of Variances and the Chesterfield Drug Task Force. He attends the Ascension Parish, where he is also a board member for the Ascension Athletic Association.

Rep. DeGroot graduated from Sioux Falls Christian High School in 1982. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1987 from the University of South Dakota and his J.D. from Saint Louis University School of Law.

Rep. DeGroot was born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and is a descendent of Buffalo Bill. He currently resides in Chesterfield. He and his wife, Jill, have three children—Regan, Cliff, and Thomas, whom they love to brag about.

[Campaign Biography, [Accessed 10/30/2017](#)]

This week, ALEC and FreedomWorks introduce Missouri State Representative Bruce DeGroot. Rep. DeGroot represents parts of St. Louis County, including Chesterfield, in the Missouri House of Representatives. He was first elected to the House in November 2016 after a long history of serving the community of Chesterfield. Prior to serving in the house, Rep. DeGroot served as a councilman for the City of Chesterfield. He is a former Trustee for the Chesterfield Farms Subdivision and has served as the Vice Chair and Secretary on the Planning Commission for the City of Chesterfield. He has also served on the Board of Variances and the Chesterfield Drug Task Force. Rep. DeGroot earned his Bachelor's degree in 1987 from the University of South Dakota and his J.D. from Saint Louis University School of Law. He was born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and is a descendent of Buffalo Bill. He currently resides in Chesterfield with his wife, Jill, and their three children—Regan, Cliff, and Thomas. Rep DeGroot and his wife are very proud of their three children.

Why did you run for office?

As a practicing attorney since 1993, I have watched Missouri become the Trial Attorney's courtroom of choice due to our favorable laws and judgments. We are now known as the "Sue Me State" instead of the "Show Me State". I ran for office to implement long overdue tort reform.

In your view, what is the biggest issue facing Missouri?

The biggest issue facing Missouri is tort reform. Missouri's economy has lagged due to excessive judgments and the feeling that Missouri is not business friendly.

If you could "wave your magic wand," what would you like to see immediately implemented in Missouri?

If I could wave my magic wand, I would enact stricter venue laws. Trial attorneys across the nation have manipulated our lax venue statute to make Missouri home to virtually any lawsuit they file.

Do you serve on any committees, if so which committees and why? How do you think you have impacted them?

I currently serve on three committees, Utilities, Litigation Reform, and I am Vice Chair of the Judiciary Committee.

What project or law are you most proud of?

Last year, my first, I drafted, filed, and passed HB 339. This new law restricts abuse of agreements between trial attorneys and underinsured defendants. These agreements too often led to excessive, extra-contractual judgments.

How has ALEC helped you as a legislator?

ALEC and ALEC model policy are a great resource. ALEC was able to put me in touch with an expert who was willing to travel to Missouri to testify in support of one of the bills I filed, Asbestos Transparency Trust. Even more important are the people of ALEC. The staff members, like Amy Kjose and Ashely Varner, are always friendly and willing to help with any question or project I have.

Can you share a fun fact about yourself that's not in your official bio?

I love to play golf. I'm just really bad at it. I've also never been to New Orleans, so I'm looking forward to the ALEC conference there this summer.

ALEC membership/ties

- Signed 2017 ALEC letter to Speaker Ryan & Leader McConnell about flexibility in AHCA
- Signed Confirm Judge Brett Kavanaugh ALEC Letter 2018
- Signed on to ALEC SALT Letter to Congress in October 2016
- Attended annual ALEC conference in Denver, 2017
- ALEC legislator of the week, 6/4/18

Other Hits

Representative DeGroot refused to denounce former Missouri Governor Eric Greitens after revelations of sexual misconduct and a campaign finance scandal came to light. Though republican leaders in the House and Senate publicly called on Greitens — charged with two felonies — to resign, while others called for impeachment proceedings, DeGroot joined the ranks of the many Missouri Republicans who remained silent. Rep. Bruce DeGroot, R-Chesterfield, walked away when asked why he'd remained silent. Tort reform "ought to be your real story," DeGroot said as he walked away. "Instead you want to talk about that crap? Wake up. Wake up." Despite the resonance of the MeToo movement, DeGroot, through his response, indicated that this was not a significant issue [St. Louis Dispatch, [5/2/2018](#); HB 1645, placed on informal calendar in Senate, [5/3/18](#)].

Representative DeGroot sponsored legislation that limits the amount of money people exposed to asbestos could be awarded. "The bill would require plaintiffs to submit their medical histories as evidence, including things not related to their claim. It would also make it easier for defendants to seek delays, and, if they lose, it would allow them within a year's time to ask a judge for a reversal under certain conditions. Opponents on both sides of the aisle called the bill cruel, saying it would result in some asbestos victims dying before receiving justice. Rep. Mark Ellebracht, D-Liberty, began his criticism by imitating the breathing of someone with mesothelioma. After being gavelled to stop, he said he was actually impersonating the Missouri House suffocating the constitutional rights of its citizens. 'These are people who have dedicated their lives to our service in the military, for the police force, for firefighters, construction workers, school teachers in dilapidated buildings,' Ellebracht said. 'I hope that you can sleep at night, without mechanical assistance, as so many people who will suffer and die from mesothelioma require'" [St. Louis Public Radio, [5/8/2018](#)].

Representative DeGroot sponsored a bill that would have made it easier for out-of-state third-party debt collectors to win default judgments against poor people. As a lawyer, five years earlier, DeGroot criticized a very similar bill, claiming, "It allows robo signers to sign affidavits based on hearsay. These affidavits are often signed with little regard for the truths it claims. I represent people who are the victims of these affidavits signed in error." But as a state representative, DeGroot switched allegiances in introducing House Bill 499. "It's a very dangerous bill," says St. Louis lawyer Jim Daher. He, too, testified against the bill in 2012. He is one of the few attorneys who specialize in helping consumers win their cases against third-party debt collectors. "This law change would make it so that the debt collectors win virtually 100 percent of the time" [St. Louis Post Dispatch, [4/23/2017](#); HB 499, Pass house, [4/5/2017](#)].

Representative DeGroot supports Right to Work. In 2017, Rep. DeGroot voted yes in the House for Right to Work legislation. If the law passes, employees won't be required to pay union fees, even though the union may still be required to represent all employees. Opponents argue it will take power away from unions and lead to lower wages [AP, [1/19/2017](#)]