



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislative Advocacy Leads to City and County Collaboration

3.2.2023 – Ozark and Nixa city administrators Steve Childers and Jimmy Liles joined the Show Me Christian County team Wednesday for a day of legislative advocacy in Jefferson City. The group met with Missouri House representatives to discuss high-priority legislative items put forth by the SMCC government relations committee.

Meeting with Representatives Jamie Ray Gragg, Bob Titus and Brad Hudson, the group expressed concerns for upcoming bills with the potential for negative economic impact in Christian County. They also highlighted support for education, expanding infrastructure, and existing incentive programs that aid in retaining businesses and improving residents' quality of life.

However, effectively advocating for Christian County's economic interests at the state level requires a united front among city and county leaders.

"There's an old fallacy that the Cities of Ozark and Nixa are competitors rather than partners when it comes to advancing economic development and that simply isn't the case," said Steve Childers, Ozark City Administrator. "For the past decade, Ozark and Nixa have cooperated as a unified voice to improve not only our cities, but all of Christian County."

"We're all on the same team," said Jimmy Liles, Nixa City Administrator. "We're here advocating in Jefferson City not just for one city or the other, but for the whole county. Legislation impacts all our communities. It is imperative that we are all on the same page."

Since Show Me's founding in 2017, public and private partners from all over Christian County have met regularly to discuss economic growth, development and legislative priorities. Bringing business owners and city officials from both Nixa and Ozark to the table for collaboration was one of many goals for the then-fledgling economic development organization.

"The current level of collaboration between Ozark and Nixa was at one point unthinkable," remarked Kristen Haseltine, President and CEO of Show Me Christian County. "The amount of progress we've made is something to be proud of, and our county is better for it."

A follow-up day of advocacy, dubbed "Christian County Day," is tentatively planned for early April. A wider group of city and county leaders is expected to make the trip to Jefferson City.

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About Show Me Christian County

Show Me Christian County is a public-private partnership working to support business attraction, business retention & expansion, workforce development, and entrepreneurship throughout Christian County. SMCC is a collaborative partnership advancing economic health through an intentional and balanced approach to growth.

For more information about Show Me Christian County, please visit our website at showmeccmo.com.