



NEWS RELEASE

State Senator Gary Nodler
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FUNDING PICTURE IMPROVES FOR MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE COLLEGE

JEFFERSON CITY-- As the General Assembly moves closer to a final agreement on the Fiscal Year 2004 Budget, the funding outlook for Missouri Southern State College has improved. According to Sen. Gary Nodler, R-Joplin, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Missouri Southern State College can expect to receive more than \$800,000 in additional funding as a result of revenue generating measures included in the final budget.

“While the overall budget picture is still pretty grim, lawmakers have been able to generate additional money for education, which has always been our top priority,” said Sen. Nodler. “This is definitely good news for Missouri Southern.”

During budget preparation, the Coordinating Board of Higher Education told the Senate Appropriations Committee that in the past MSSC, Missouri Western State College, Northwest Missouri State University and Southwest Missouri State University had been underfunded. A 10.8 percent reduction would unfairly penalize these institutions.

“A 10.8 percent reduction would have meant a loss of approximately \$2.1 million for MSSC,” Sen. Nodler said. “A loss like that would have shut down important programs and services for the students at this fine school.”

Upon a motion made by Sen. Nodler, the Senate Appropriations Committee adjusted the original baseline for all higher education institutions to reflect the equitable funding formula recommended by the coordinating board.

Working with the coordinating board’s recommendations, Sen. Nodler was able to insure that MSSC will receive .05 percent more in FY 2004, totaling \$9,168, with their total budget appropriation coming to \$19,221,019.

A contingency provision was included in the budget to be used if the Senate succeeded in generating new revenue.

The Senate was successful in its efforts, generating approximately \$166 million in additional revenue by making numerous one-time changes to Missouri's tax codes in House Bill 600. One provision raises an estimated \$66 million by eliminating the use of accelerated tax depreciation schedule and \$15 million by having national retailers based in other states but doing business in Missouri pay the same corporate taxes as Missouri-based retailers.

"Approximately \$35 million of that revenue will go toward higher education," said Sen. Nodler.

Since the Senate was successful in finding that revenue, MSSC will now receive \$20,078,39 – an additional \$857,374 over the original figure.

"For a rapidly growing institution like Missouri Southern, every extra dollar makes a difference," said Sen. Nodler. "These funds will allow Southern to maintain the high quality of education that students expect when they enroll at that institution."

The Missouri Senate and the House of Representatives continues to debate the FY 2004 budget. According to the Missouri Constitution, lawmakers must complete work on the budget by 6 p.m. one week before the end of regular session – this year that date falls on May 9.

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