



# WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler  
District 32



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Missouri Southern Is One Step Closer to Becoming Missouri Southern State University - Joplin**

Missouri Southern State College is one step closer to becoming Missouri Southern State University – Joplin. On Thursday, the Missouri Senate gave final approval to Senate Bill 55 and it now heads to the House of Representatives for debate.

Some changes were made to the original bill, all of which will have a positive impact on Southern.

Under this substitute, when two institutions of higher learning have a cooperative agreement to have graduate classes, any diploma awarded would include the names of both institutions.

For example, when a student earns a Masters in Elementary Education from Southwest Missouri State University, while attending those classes at MSSU, their diploma would have the names of both Southwest Missouri State University and Missouri Southern State University – Joplin.

This language is identical to another Senate bill I introduced – Senate Bill 56.

In addition, Missouri Southern would be added to the list of institutions that are charged with a statewide mission and governed by a board of governors. MSSC would retain its international mission.

Southern would be required to discontinue all associate degree programs by July 21, 2008, unless the continuation of such associate degree programs is approved by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education.

This is a change that will have a spillover effect that will benefit other area colleges. Crowder College in Neosho could pick up some two-year programs and others could be offered through a cooperative arrangement between the two institutions.

The changes made under this bill will make Missouri Southern stronger, Crowder College would be stronger, in fact; the entire higher educational system will be made stronger.

In other business this week, my bill, Senate Bill 404 was heard before the Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. This bill, which I introduced at the request of Dennis Veach, Carthage Chief of Police, would make manufacturing a controlled substance within 2,000 feet of a school a class A felony.

Frank Lundien, an investigator for the Jasper County Drug Task Force, and Sheldon Lineback, executive director of the Missouri Police Chiefs Association, also offered testimony in favor of this legislation.

In recent years, Missouri has seen a rise in the manufacture of methamphetamine, a powerful, highly addictive drug. Unlike other illegal substances, meth can be manufactured in dangerous makeshift labs. Often these makeshift labs are located in our neighborhoods and near our schools.

The horror stories surrounding the meth problem in Missouri are frightening. It's crucial that we protect our children from the damage done by this and other drugs, by passing tougher laws that offer greater punishment for the offender.

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