



# WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler  
District 32



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## **Passage of Small Business Legislation is Critical to Jump-Starting Missouri's Sagging Economy**

Small business is the backbone of Missouri's economy, and this session I am co-sponsoring legislation that would be an important vehicle to promoting small business.

Under Senate Bill 69, a Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board would be created within the Department of Economic Development. This board would provide state agencies with input on proposed small business rules, consider requests from small business owners for review of agency rules, and make recommendations to state agencies and the General Assembly regarding the need for a rule or legislation.

Modeled after an existing federal panel, the state fairness board would review regulations before agencies implement them in order to ensure proposed rules serve a necessary purpose without imposing an unfair burden on business.

Small businesses often feel overwhelmed by the impact of state regulations on their business operations. This board would even the playing field.

The board would consist of nine members, all of whom would be current or former business owners. The governor and the chairman of the House and Senate small business committees would each name two members. The lieutenant governor, Senate president pro tem and House speaker would each pick one member. Board members would not be paid and would meet at least twice a year to regulate and recommend changes to agencies.

Public hearings would be held by the board in order to provide small businesses with a greater voice in the creation of new regulations.

Throughout my career, promoting small business has been one of my top priorities. In 1989, President George Bush appointed me to serve as Regional Administrator for the United States Small Business Administration, a post I held until President Bush left in 1993. Later, in

1997, I was appointed to a shared staff position working with Sen. Christopher Bond, then Sen. John Ashcroft and Congressman Roy Blunt on matters relating to small business and federal procurement.

It's critical that Missouri maintain a thriving small business community.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, small businesses employed 1,164,560 or 49.5 percent of Missouri's 2,350,965 employees (non-farm private sector) in 1999. The industry with the most small businesses was retail trade.

Proprietors' income – a partial measure of small business income – totaled \$12.2 billion in 2001, an increase of 3.6 percent over 2000.

A vibrant and growing small business sector is critical to jump-starting Missouri's sagging economy.

Senate and House leadership has placed SB 69 on their list of top priorities. I will do my best to ensure this legislation is passed, and I would welcome any questions or comments from small business owners in Southwest Missouri.

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