



# WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler  
District 32



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## **LAWMAKERS HOLD THE LINE DESPITE GOVERNOR'S SCARE TACTICS**

Gov. Bob Holden is at it again, trying to use scare tactics to force his agenda through the General Assembly.

For the last two weeks, lawmakers have attempted to work with the governor to reach an agreement on the four budget bills, which he vetoed. The governor, who refused to cooperate with the Legislature for most of the regular session, has once again tried to throw a wrench into the budget process by claiming the state is facing a \$173 million shortfall.

In reality, according to Senate projections the state has a surplus of \$317 million.

The fact is, the governor wants it to seem as if the state has less money so that he can justify his attempts to raise your taxes.

These tactics are typical of this governor. Time and time again he has tried to break away from the manner in which the General Assembly builds a budget.

Traditionally every January the Senate, the House of Representatives and the governor's office develop a consensus revenue figure, which the budget is based on. Consensus numbers are based on the previous year's revenue and projected economic growth.

During this special session, Gov. Holden has tried to turn these consensus numbers into a moving target. However, based on the traditional manner in which the Missouri General Assembly has done business, the 2004 Fiscal Year budget is not only balanced, it has a \$317 million surplus.

The governor's current budget figures are based on a snapshot of May's estimates. These numbers may or may not be more accurate than the numbers we developed in January.

The General Assembly developed consensus revenue estimates 12 years ago to specifically avoid the kind of moving target tactics the governor is trying to use this budget year.

If these consensus figures are incorrect, the state has a mechanism in place to correct that. In January, lawmakers will again look at the budget and if it is necessary, will pass a supplemental budget bill.

Without raising taxes, during this special session lawmakers succeeded in developing a budget that is not only balanced, but has a surplus. It remains to be seen what action the governor will take.

It's my belief, though, that we don't need to rely on the clairvoyance of the governor's office, what we need is the discipline to conform to the budget developed from the consensus figures.

**NOTE TO EDITORS: Now that the regular session is complete, future Capitol reports will be sporadic and sent when needed.**

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