



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



Room 433 - State Capitol Bldg. - Jefferson City, MO 65101 - Phone: (573) 751-2306

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For additional information contact:
Barbara Mustoe
(573) 751-2306

GENERAL ASSEMBLY SENDS EDUCATION BUDGET BILLS BACK TO THE GOVERNOR'S DESK

The Missouri General Assembly this week repassed the education budget bills that Gov. Bob Holden previously vetoed. The governor on Friday morning indicated that he will sign the education funding bills, thereby avoiding a Constitutional crisis on July 1.

While I am pleased the governor has finally agreed to sign the legislation, I am concerned about the governor's threat to withhold an additional \$190,000 million to elementary and secondary education and additional money from higher education.

While such withholdings might become necessary during the year and the governor's pessimistic revenue figures may prove correct, such withholdings, at this time, are excessive and premature.

We should be trying to provide as much funding to our schools as soon as possible.

It is unfortunate that the governor has chosen to use education as his platform in a showdown with the General Assembly.

This special session has come down to a philosophical battle of wills with the governor on one side advocating raising your taxes and the continuation of business as usual in Jefferson City. Meanwhile, the Republican-led legislature is on the other side fighting against any new taxes and calling for a reduction in government spending.

For four weeks, lawmakers have attempted to work with the governor to reach an agreement on the budget bills, which he vetoed. The governor, who refused to cooperate with the legislature for most of the regular session, has continued to insist that new taxes are the only way to adequately fund education.

As I have said before, this showdown is completely unnecessary because according to Senate projections the state has a surplus of \$284 million.

It is time for the governor to stop fighting the General Assembly and instead start working with us to bring our state back to economic prosperity.

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