

Weekly Report
Week of 5-7

By: Sen. Matt Bartle
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The last week of the legislative session is quickly approaching. Lawmakers have until 6 p.m. on May 14 to act on the hundreds of bills that have been introduced this year. To date, the General Assembly has sent 22 bills to the governor.

Both chambers have mostly approved what is projected to be an \$18.8 billion state budget that will provide \$2.8 billion directly to K-12 schools. This amount is \$143 million more than what was appropriated for schools for the current fiscal year ending June 30. This is a 5.4 percent increase.

Colleges and universities will receive approximately a 2 percent boost in their funding for the coming year. The reason we were able to do this, without a tax increase, is because our economy is picking up. When Missourians and Missouri companies thrive, they produce income, which is in turn taxed. The more money people and companies earn, the more money the state has to spend on schools, roads and other priorities.

To update you on the budget, the entire funding plan for essential state services is now before House and Senate conferees, who must iron out any and all chamber differences and bring the consensus back to their respective bodies. The state constitution requires lawmakers to then adopt and deliver a budget to the governor by 6 p.m. on May 7.

As you may already know, the governor released his withholdings from education. Jackson County school districts received from the governor's release of the \$115 million the following amounts: Fort Osage - \$801,591, Blue Springs - \$2,324,643, Grain Valley - \$262,849, Oak Grove - \$259,737, Lee's Summit - \$2,593,990, Raytown - \$1,481,137, Lone Jack - \$73,237, and Independence - \$2,204,281. This money has been given to the schools for the current school year, which is almost over. School leaders breathed a sigh of relief when this money came in. It will help relieve the strain that has been placed on our schools during the economic downturn.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at matt_bartle@senate.state.mo.us. Also, you can read any of the bills I file on my website at: <http://www.senate.state.mo.us/04info/members/mem08.htm>).

Thank you again for making it possible for me to serve in the Missouri Senate.