



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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The Cauthorn Report

JEFFERSON CITY, MO - Promoting Missouri's agricultural community, fighting methamphetamine, and ensuring the state lives within its means were the major themes this week both in Jefferson City and in the district. As the legislative session winds down I believe we are on the right track to improving the quality of life for the people of Northeast Missouri.

Nearly 30-million gallons of biodiesel will be produced each year at Missouri's first biodiesel plant in Mexico. Monday I attended the announcement of this exciting opportunity where Mid-America Biofuels LLC, a partnership of farmer-owned organizations, will be the primary owner. Our farmers will see greater benefits in the products they sell. Construction should begin this summer and be completed in 12-18 months.

The best means of improving our state's economy is thru our natural resources. We are in a global economy and we must enter these types of ventures to we can compete and create wealth in this new millennium. By building a plant here in Missouri our farmers can possibly see an increase of 15-cents per bushel of soybeans. While many states in the country are planting fewer soybeans then last year, Missouri is growing more and we are finding greater uses for what we produce.

While our nation faces the need for a sound energy plan, Missouri is taking the initiative to produce quality products such as biodiesel. Biodiesel is a clean burning fuel produced from renewable resources. Biodiesel blends can be used in most diesel engines with little or no modifications. The product is also friendlier to the environment while being biodegradable and nontoxic.

Missouri has been the number one meth producing state in the nation. Think about that for a moment. Four consecutive years we have had more meth labs than the state of California. Missouri has 5 million people while California has 35 million residents. How can a state 1/7th the size of California have more meth labs? This truly is a problem that needs to be solved and the state is going to get tough on meth cookers.

Senate Bill 10 classifies over-the-counter cold medicines containing pseudoephedrine, such as Actifed,

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Sudafed and Nyquil, as Schedule V drugs that can only be purchased from pharmacists or registered technicians. An individual could not purchase more than nine grams of the medicine within a 30-day period. All purchases would be logged in a database for police inspection. This week the House passed Senate Bill 10, my legislation that cracks down on meth cookers. Governor Blunt has pledged his support for this legislation and will sign it soon.

States like Oklahoma that have enacted similar laws have witnessed a dramatic decrease in meth. By simply cutting off meth cookers from their supply lines we can limit the amount of the evil drug they produce. Less meth means less people becoming addicted to this drug and less harm to themselves, their families, and their neighbors.

As the May 6 deadline approaches for passing a balanced budget, the Senate has given approval to a \$19.2-billion budget for the state to operate. Some differences between Senate and House versions are being hammered out in a conference committee but I believe the bottom line is we have a sound budget that lives within the means of the state – all without a tax increase.

Education is our state's number one priority and our budget will see a \$113 million increase from last year. The First Steps program that helps developmentally disabled children has been restored. School district trust fund distributions, school food programs, special education, and workforce investment have all seen increased funding. The governor pledged in his campaign that K-12 education would always get more money than the year before and that money would never be withheld. I am proud we are sticking to that pledge.

Last fall voters overwhelmingly approved Amendment 3 that ensures road and fuel taxes go directly to roads and not to general revenue. This will ensure an additional \$12 million for new construction projects and an additional \$45 million for maintenance projected. We are seeing an improvement in accountability from the Department of Transportation and the new director is aggressively seeking out our most dangerous and crumbled roads and getting to work fixing them.

This budget has made the legislature face a lot of tough challenges and decisions. We were all elected to do the business of the people and to ensure the state lives within its means. A lot of state programs were growing out of control and would collapse due to their own weight. Instead of just funding a broken program in hopes someone else down the line would take care of them we confronted these problems and worked to solve them.

The final two weeks of session may determine how we fund our schools and many other issues important to the state of Missouri. Please feel free to call or e-mail my office with your questions, comments or concerns.

Sen. Cauthorn represents Missouri's 18th Senate District. He can be reached at his capitol office at (573) 751-6850. You can also visit his web page by going to www.senate.mo.gov/cauthorn.