

*“Nothing is politically right  
which is morally wrong.”*  
– Daniel O’Connell



*“Free and fair discussion will ever be  
found the firmest friend of truth.”*  
– George Campbell

# MISSOURI SENATE

**Senator Bill Stouffer**  
District 21

**Capitol Building, Room 332**  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **Senator Stouffer on SB539**

### The Beginning, Not the End, of Medicaid

This session, legislators have used words like waste, fraud and abuse to describe the current Medicaid system. My office continues to receive calls asking if individuals will be affected by this new Medicaid reform.

Medicaid will continue to exist. An interim committee will be working on a new system that will replace the old Medicaid system which is failing customers, providers and taxpayers.

A colleague of mine took a constituent back to his office to see how the state could help under the new Medicaid legislation. This constituent, “Bob”, would take his \$2200 in bills to his caseworker and present his bills with his SSI income of \$1100 per month. Then, his caseworker would require him to pay \$500 for his medicine and the state would pay the remaining \$1700.

He would have \$600 per month to live on.

Bob testified it would be impossible for him to live on \$600 per month and that he would die without his medication. Seeing no additional state help, the senator and Bob went through financial records to see if there was a way for him to continue to survive.

The senator asked if he rented or owned his own home. He replied that in the past year he had built a 1500 square-foot home with basement—this would be quite a luxury in Saline County! Under the current system, his medications are paid for and after his house payment he is left with \$300. How can he live on \$300 per month now? When asked to use a \$100,000 in savings to pay off his house and end the \$800 monthly payments, he replied the savings would not pay off his house entirely and he did not want to lose interest on the money. As it happens, he is paying more for interest on his home loan than he is earning from the bank. Talk about having your cake and eating it too—why should taxpayers provide for someone with these types of assets?

I visited with doctors this week from Clay, Ray, and Lafayette Counties to discuss other abuses. Doctors say they are afraid to take Medicaid patients because they skip co-pays, are more likely to sue and abuse emergency room visits. I was also told Medicaid patients will go to two or three different emergency rooms in one night. Not all Medicaid patients abuse the system, but when the system is abused- everyone gets hurt.

My office is more than willing to help constituents learn how and if Medicaid reform will affect them. These are difficult times—over the next year, ten percent of Medicaid recipients will be removed from Medicaid. Don't be fooled by the political rhetoric, there will always be a Medicaid-type of system to take care of our most vulnerable citizens.

We strongly encourage suggestions and questions on this issue; please feel free to call toll free 866-768-3987 or email me at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).