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Senate Appropriations Chairman Chuck Gross Critical Of Auditor Claire McCaskill
And Former Revenue Director After Discovery of \$1 Million In Unused Computers

JEFFERSON CITY -- Senate Appropriations Chairman Chuck Gross, R-St. Charles, today strongly criticized Auditor Claire McCaskill for political grandstanding over her alleged "discovery" of \$1 million in computer equipment sitting idle in a Department of Revenue warehouse just days after her former opponent for governor took office.

McCaskill, who as state auditor is responsible for detecting government waste, waited until the first days of the new administration of Gov. Matt Blunt to reveal the wasteful spending on unused computers. Blunt defeated McCaskill in November for the office of governor.

"Claire McCaskill is attempting to taint Gov. Blunt for wasteful practices she missed or withheld on her watch that were committed by a revenue director appointed by her fellow Democrat Gov. Bob Holden," Gross said. "Claire is engaging in bad politics, not good policy and the people of this state deserve better from their elected officials."

As state auditor, McCaskill is responsible for regularly auditing the accounts and practices of state agencies and governmental entities to assure compliance with accepted standards. Gross, who previously served as vice-chairman of the Appropriations Committee, has worked for years to balance the state's budget during a critical period of revenue shortages throughout the Holden Administration.

Gross said he found it especially unsettling that former-Gov. Holden's head of Revenue would stash \$1 million in unused computer equipment stored in a warehouse while lawmakers were forced to slash programs for the mentally ill, public schools and senior citizens to balance the budget as required by the state constitution.

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"There is absolutely no excuse for this type of shameful waste by Gov. Holden or his director of the Department of Revenue," Gross said. "After Holden's director misled lawmakers about their budget needs, McCaskill tries to turn this to her political advantage."

Gross called on McCaskill to more fully explain why the announcement of her discovery waited until after she lost the election, and he asked her to join the efforts by lawmakers and the new governor in their efforts to improve state government.

"This is exactly the type of wasteful abuse that Gov. Blunt and the new General Assembly were elected to clean out of Missouri government, and that is exactly what we are going to do," Gross said.

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