



Investing in Education

A Sound Education Resonates Beyond the Classroom

Funding public education is one of the best investments the State of Missouri can make because it is an investment in our State's future. This past session, countless hours were spent rewriting our State's foundation formula to develop a much more effective way to distribute education funding. Once implemented, the new formula will increase education funding by \$800 million over the next seven years. This year's budget alone is the largest school budget in Missouri history as we increased funding by \$158 million, for a total K-12 investment of nearly \$4 billion.

Having a thriving pool of well-educated workers in Missouri is critical to our state's economy. This past year Toyota, the world's second-largest automaker, was deciding where to build a new assembly plant in the United States. There was fierce competition among several states to land the assembly plant. Despite being offered hundreds of millions of dollars in tax incentives, Toyota decided this past March to go a completely different direction and put the new plant in Ontario, Canada. Why did Toyota make such an unexpected move? Toyota was impressed by the quality of Ontario's work force.

In another example, we travel across the Atlantic to Ireland, the second wealthiest country in the European Union after Luxembourg. Ireland's per capita gross domestic product is higher than the traditional powerhouses of Britain, France, and Germany. Ireland did not become this wealthy by luck, rather through wise fiscal planning and considerable investment in education since the late 1960s. Their investment has paid off: today, 9 out of 10 of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, 16 of the top 20 medical device companies, and 7 out of 10 software designers have operations in Ireland. Dell Computers, the world's largest manufacturer of personal computers, made Ireland its home in 1990. As Dell founder and CEO Michael Dell said of the decision, Ireland's "well-educated work force - and good universities close by," as well as "an industrial and tax policy which is consistently very supportive of businesses," were the main reasons Dell located in Ireland. Intel, the world's largest software company, opened its first chip factory in Ireland in 1993 citing again the large pool of young educated workers and the low corporate taxes.

These stories out of Canada and Ireland remind us of the importance of an educated workforce. They remind us why it is so crucial that Missouri does everything it can to improve its education system. I support funding education and spurring economic growth over spending ever increasing amounts of money on social programs. I believe a thriving pool of educated Missourians and a booming supply of quality jobs are necessary for Missouri's long-term prosperity. These are not easy decisions or easy choices, but they are decisions and choices I stand by as your voice in Jefferson City and decisions that will leave Missouri stronger for future generations.

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.jasoncrowell.com>.

Thank you for your time.

Senator Jason Crowell represents the people of Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry and Scott counties in the Missouri Senate.