



# WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler  
District 32



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## *Working to Close Loopholes*

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JEFFERSON CITY – Heard this week in the Senate’s Judiciary Committee was a bill I’ve been working on for several months that would stiffen penalties for those convicted of involuntary manslaughter in certain circumstances.

Genesis for the legislation are the tragic deaths of 7-year-old Jessica Mann and her grandfather, James Dodson, who perished as a result of injuries inflicted by a car that left the roadway and struck them where they had been walking. The car’s driver was intoxicated, and has been charged with involuntary manslaughter, which carries a maximum of only 7 years imprisonment.

Under Senate Bill 37, a person who commits involuntary manslaughter is guilty of a Class A felony if the person has a blood alcohol level that is one and a half times the legal limit, or if a fatality occurs when the person’s vehicle leaves a public thoroughfare.

I’ve had the honor of working with the family of Jessica and Mr. Dodson in advancing this bill. Our collective efforts won’t return loved ones lost to needless death, but this legislation will ensure the consistent and just application of consequences on those that so carelessly and senselessly inflict harm.

I met this week with my Senate and House peers in a joint session of the legislature to hear the governor’s State-of-the-State address and budget message. Governor Blunt detailed his wish to balance the state budget and increase school funding without raising taxes, and pledged to do so by reviewing tax policies and cracking down on waste, fraud and abuse in government.

As chair of the Senate Education Committee, I will be working closely with the governor and others with vested stakes in our public school system to ensure that every Missouri child has access to a quality, equitably funded education.

The governor also mentioned his commitment to legislation broadening the practice of advance voting, tracking the sale of over-the-counter cold remedies used in the production of methamphetamine and revising workers' compensation law.

In an effort to allow more Missourians to hear his message, Governor Blunt delivered his remarks to lawmakers in the evening – rather than the traditional morning delivery of previous years. A number of television and radio stations aired live coverage of the address, which I think was beneficial for Missourians interested in hearing of plans for their state.

The Missouri Senate convenes again on Monday, January 31. Two days later, lawmakers will again meet in joint session to hear the transportation department's chief deliver his annual report.

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