

Patrick *State Senator*  
**Dougherty**  
Capitol Report 2005



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## *Sen. Dougherty Visits Cancer Center*

Sen. Dougherty recently visited the Siteman Cancer Center to deliver a resolution congratulating its members on becoming a National Cancer Institute (NCI) Comprehensive Cancer Center. There are only 37 other NCI comprehensive centers in the United States, and Siteman is the only one in Missouri. It is a great privilege to have such excellent cancer care and research in our community.

While at the Siteman Cancer Center, Sen. Dougherty learned about a new NCI grant the Center recently received.

This program may be of interest to members of our community.

The Siteman Cancer Center's Program for the Elimination of Cancer Disparities (PECaD) was recently recognized by



*Sen. Dougherty (second from left) presents the congratulatory resolution to the Siteman Cancer Center. Also pictured (from left): Brian Springer, Director of Research and Business Administration; Shirley Johnson, Director of Oncology Services; and Maryann R. Coletti, Patient Advocate/Government Relations Coordinator.*

NCI with a \$1.9-million five-year grant. The focus of this grant is developing community partnerships to enhance outreach, care, education and research related to overcoming disparities of care for minority and underserved populations, with specific emphasis on African Americans. This new initiative will improve the broad array of education and outreach activities led by Siteman.

You might qualify for cancer prevention, early detection and education programs, such as mammography, colonoscopy, pap smear and prostate exam and tobacco-cessation programs.

To participate in or to see if you qualify, or for more information about these or other cancer educational activities, call the Siteman Cancer Center at (800) 600-3606.

## *Missouri's Medicaid Reform Commission*

This past session featured major debates about cutting people off of health care in our state. In the end, more than 104,000 Missourians will lose health care and 360,000 others will possibly lose some form of coverage. Increasing the ranks of the uninsured, many of whom are the working poor, is definitely not the answer.

The Medicaid Reform Commission was established as part of the new legislation to re-invent the system because it will expire in 2008. I am a member of the commission and will be working to prevent further cuts, while those in charge determine which way they intend to have the program go. However, a very important duty as public servants is to find ways to provide coverage to the uninsured, especially those who lost their Medicaid assistance due to the recent callous decisions.

While Missouri does have budget problems, supporters of Senate Bill 539 have chosen to end coverage and services to the disadvantaged. SB 539,

passed and signed into law earlier this year, cuts more than 100,000 Missourians off Medicaid within a year. Further, the reductions could end up costing taxpayers more in the long run because Medicaid recipients will be forced to use emergency, not preventive, care. Missouri needs to make tough decisions about its finances, but the answer should not be attacking our most vulnerable.

The Missouri economy will suffer as well. Medicaid generates nearly \$6 billion in economic activity and supports nearly 80,000 jobs. Missouri will also lose out on \$379 million in federal funds due to Medicaid cutbacks. This bill does not make economic sense.

Supporters of this legislation fail to realize that the cost of Medicaid is the result of a deeper problem. Health insurance and prescription drug costs are too high for all citizens, and even hard-working families often cannot afford coverage. These are the issues I want to address as a member of the Medicaid Reform Commission.

## *Protecting Consumers from Identity Theft*

This year, several colleagues and I teamed up to pass legislation needed to protect Missourians from identity theft and other forms of consumer fraud. Although the measure was not considered a priority this year, in the next session I am committed to ensuring that Missouri citizens' personal information is not for sale.

Legislation I sponsored this year to protect consumers stemmed from the recent problems at Choicepoint, Inc., a company that sells access to people's financial records to businesses and government agencies. In February of this year, Choicepoint announced that it had unknowingly sold sensitive personal information to scammers posing as legitimate customers. The scandal affected more than 1,500 Missourians and up to 500,000 people across the country. Since then, other instances have occurred nationwide.

In an effort to protect Missourians from the



unauthorized spreading of their personal information, the legislation would require Missouri businesses that own or license computerized data to disclose any breach of security to all citizens whose information may have been illicitly disclosed. By requiring companies to disclose their security breaches to all those who could be affected, we can limit the extent of the damage for identity theft victims.

The bill also would allow for Missourians to place security alerts on their credit reports to notify any recipient of the report that the individual might have been a victim of identity theft. This measure will help victims get back on their feet after having undergone the traumatic experience of identity theft.

While my colleagues and I were unable to get this legislation signed into law, I will continue the fight to ensure state businesses keep consumer information safe from fraudulent criminals.

## *Homestead Preservation Act — Prepare for Spring 2006*

The Homestead Preservation Act is an important piece of legislation in Missouri that allows qualified senior citizens and disabled individuals to apply for tax credits on their property tax payments.

The Homestead Preservation Tax Credit provides credit in cases where property taxes increase more than 2.5 percent in non-assessment years or 5 percent in assessment years. Non-assessment periods coincide with even-numbered years, such as 2004, while assessment years are odd-numbered.

To qualify for the program, applicants must:

- Be age 65 or older as of Jan. 1, 2005.
- Have a federally adjusted gross income not exceeding \$70,000 per year.
- Have paid all real estate taxes for the current year and previous two years.
- Own and occupy the property; or be 100 percent disabled.
- Apply once every two years.

Forms and instructions for the property tax credit are available at the Department of Revenue offices and

on the department's Web site ([www.dor.mo.gov](http://www.dor.mo.gov)).

The application cycle runs from April 1, 2006, through Sept. 30, 2006.

To contact the Department of Revenue, dial (573) 751-3505 or e-mail [homestead@dor.mo.gov](mailto:homestead@dor.mo.gov).

## *Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital Poison Center — Cord Blood Bank*

Did you know that dialing either 772-5200 or (800) 222-1222 reaches the statewide poison center and is run by Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital? Not only that, but it serves more than 100,000 citizens and every hospital in our state 24/7.

With the debate raging on the use of stem cells to treat disease, Cardinal Glennon's Cord Blood Bank is leading the way collecting stem cells from umbilical cord blood. For more information call 577-5600.

## ***Lead Abatement: Protecting Our Children***

One issue that I have continued to work on over the years is the fight to prevent the exposure of our children to lead. Numerous negative effects are associated with lead exposure, including difficulty learning, reduced attention span, hearing loss, and violent behavior. Fortunately, my colleagues and I were able to pass legislation this year making important improvements to Missouri's lead-abatement laws.

Lead is especially prevalent in older cities, such as St. Louis and Kansas City. This legislation, which includes language from a bill I helped sponsor, will strengthen Missouri's hand in ensuring our buildings and homes are not dangerous to Missouri children.

Under the bill, the Department of Health and Senior Services will provide on its Web site educational materials explaining the rights and responsibilities of property owners, tenants, and others concerning lead abatement.

Department officials, as well as representatives from local governments and health departments, will also be authorized to re-enter dwellings or child-occupied facilities to determine if the owner has taken the required actions for abating or establishing interim controls for an identified lead hazard.

Lead-abatement contractors are now required to purchase and maintain liability and error-and-omissions insurance and be able to show evidence of their coverage. A \$1 check-off also has been established on Missouri income-tax return forms. Funds from the check-off will be deposited into the Childhood Lead Testing Fund, which provides funding for a state program requiring every child less than 6 years old to be tested for lead poisoning.

These reforms will make invaluable improvements to the safety of Missouri children and protect those we love.



*Sen. Dougherty discusses legislative issues at a news conference with House Minority Leader Jeff Harris (left) and Senate Minority Leader Maida Coleman (right).*

### ***Extending Neighborhood Rights***

After hearing from neighborhood associations in my district that were disappointed with the conditions of some residences, I sponsored legislation in 2005 granting greater means of challenging those who do not maintain the property they own.

The language, which passed as an amendment to House Bill 58, allows neighborhood associations the right to file a nuisance action against a nearby property owner when the property owner fails to maintain his or her property. Formerly, only individuals were able to file nuisance complaints against property owners.

This legislation applies to neighborhood organizations in St. Louis, Kansas City and Springfield, and in Platte, Jefferson, and St. Louis counties.



*Grand Oak Hill Community Award.*



*Medicaid Reform Commission Hearings.*

### ***In the 4th District:***

Sen. Dougherty likes to get out into the 4th District to enjoy community events and see what's on the minds of local residents.



*Attending a Neighborhood Outing in the 26th Ward.*

## *Medicare Part D: The Facts*

For seniors struggling to pay for the prescription drugs they need, the federal government is adding a new program to Medicare. The Medicare Part D program provides prescription-drug insurance coverage for Medicare beneficiaries. Members of the program pay a monthly premium, approximately \$35 in 2006, and pay a share of the cost of their prescriptions.

Enrollment for Medicare Part D began November 15, with coverage beginning January 1 of next year. Some seniors have already received applications from the Social Security Administration for the program. I encourage everyone to complete and return the application.

For an application or more information, contact Social Security at (800) 772-1213 or visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), or Medicare at (800) 633-4227 or visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).



*Sen. Dougherty discusses legislation on the Senate floor with Sen. Chuck Graham.*

## **Help with Prescription Drugs**

Do you have insurance and are still unable to afford the co-pays for your prescription drugs? Help may be available. The Patient Advocate Foundation's Co-Pay Relief (CPR) Program provides direct co-payment assistance for pharmaceutical products to insured Americans who qualify. These counselors assist patients throughout the application process and screen for eligibility

by collecting financial and medical information from everyone who calls to apply for the CPR program. The CPR program assists patients diagnosed with breast, lung or prostate cancer, or macular degeneration. Assistance may also be available to patients who are experiencing secondary issues as a result of cancer treatment. For assistance, please call PAF toll-free at (866) 512-3861.

## **Get Involved**

The Volunteer Center of the United Way of Greater St. Louis works to strengthen area communities by promoting effective volunteer experiences. The program helps link individuals who want to volunteer with agencies that need them and connects companies to hundreds of volunteer projects.

For more information, call (800) 865-8685 or visit [www.stlunitedway.org](http://www.stlunitedway.org) or [www.stl-cares.org](http://www.stl-cares.org).

## *Some of the Bills Sponsored by Senator Dougherty*

- SB 7 - Modifies provisions relating to lead poisoning
- SB 8 - Creates the Children's Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council
- SB 59 - Prohibits use of genetic information and testing for insurance purposes
- SB 60 - Increases the foster care reimbursement and the adoption subsidy rates over a four-year period
- SB 90 - Authorizes advanced practice nurses to prescribe certain controlled substances
- SB 145 - Prohibits use of posted inquiries in calculating credit risk scores
- SB 146 - Allows the Department of Health to investigate complaints of air quality in public schools

- SB 203 - Adds young adult provisions to the Missouri Consolidated Health Care plan
- SB 204 - requires health insurance companies to provide coverage for routine patient care costs incurred as the result of clinical trials undertaken to treat cancer
- SB 369 - Mandates inpatient insurance coverage for mastectomies and reconstructive surgeries
- SB 370 - Prohibits homeowner insurers from cancelling or renewing policies based upon claim inquiries
- SB 505 - Creates penalties for imposing certain fees by a credit card issuer
- SB 506 - Provides consumer protection for computerized personal information

## Shredding the Safety Net

While the 2005 legislative session has had many positive results, several dangerous pieces of legislation have also made it through the Missouri General Assembly. One of the most conspicuous examples of legislation that will have a disastrous effect on our state is a bill cutting tens of thousands of people from our Medicaid program.

Senate Bill 539, which has been signed into law by Gov. Blunt, eliminates about 100,000 Missourians from the Medicaid program, which provides health-care benefits for those in need.

The changes will result in the elimination of health-care coverage for the following Missourians: 68,000 low-income working women and men; 3,000 people with temporary disabilities; 9,500 working disabled people; 8,600 elderly and disabled citizens; and 13,000 others. Further, other health benefits that had been guaranteed will be subject

to appropriations, which could affect 350,000 Missourians.

While Medicaid does require reform, these attempts are misguided. Health insurance and prescription drug costs are too high for all of us, and even hard-working families often cannot afford coverage. Rather than work to come up with solutions to this health-care crisis, many legislators supported a bill that cuts costs by stripping working citizens of their health benefits.

Like-minded colleagues and I were able to save many children from the cuts by fighting off efforts to negatively

impact the Children's Health Insurance Program, which provides health insurance for children in need.

While the so-called reforms continue, I will work together with others to pass compassionate and effective legislation that I know can help provide for those Missourians most in need of help.



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### Committees:

Administration

Appropriations

Aging, Families, Mental and Public Health

Pensions, Veterans' Affairs and General Laws

Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions & Ethics

Joint Committee on Capital Improvements  
and Leases Oversight

Joint Committee on Legislative Research

Joint Committee on Hazardous Waste Generators & Hazardous  
Waste Facilities

Joint Committee on Solid Waste

### Boards and Commissions:

Medicaid Reform Commission

Children's Trust Fund • National Conference of State Legislatures

Nurses for Newborns • Governor's Lead Advisory Committee

St. Louis Crisis Nursery • Task Force on Children's Justice

Patient Advocate Foundation • Personal Independence Commission

Missouri Restorative Justice Coalition

National Labor Caucus of State Legislators • St. Patrick Center

National Caucus of Environmental Legislators

National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) and Lance

Armstrong Foundation's (LAF) Cancer Survivorship Technical  
Advisory Committee

# Missouri's State Budget:

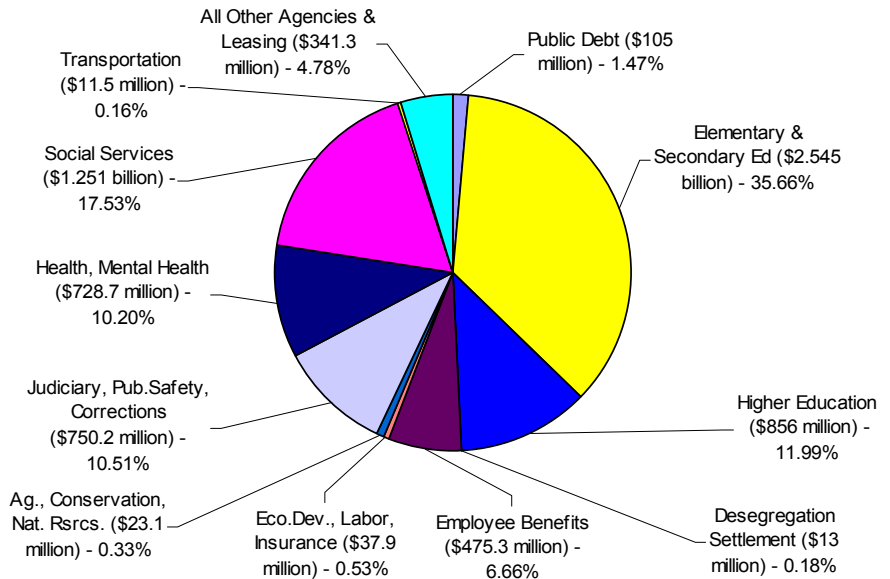
*Missourians believe in a better chance at success.*

At the end of the 2005 regular legislative session, many state lawmakers lauded the so-called accomplishments of the General Assembly. They cited the 2006 budget as reason for celebration. They said the state is efficiently providing for all Missourians. But rescinding Medicaid health benefits for 100,000 Missourians isn't a victory. I call it moral bankruptcy.

Although several of my colleagues and I fought our hardest to see that this harmful budget would not pass, our efforts were not enough. The budget for fiscal year 2006 slashes more than \$260 million from the health-care budget and \$1.7 billion from higher education. These cuts will have a devastating impact on our homes and communities in the 4th District and on Missourians throughout the state.

Too many promises to protect Missouri seniors and students have been broken. We must not turn our backs on those in need who have no other place to go.

**Distribution of State General Revenue Tax Dollars**  
 FY 2006 *After-Veto* Missouri Operating Appropriations  
 General Revenue: \$7.159 Billion  
 (Only State Revenue)



These acts have hurt our state and citizens. I know that my like-minded colleagues and I will do everything we can to halt these attacks on our fellow Missourians.

## Help with Heating Costs

With natural gas rates expected to increase by more than 40 percent in the coming winter, Missouri families need more help than ever in covering their utility bills.

If you think you will have trouble paying your utility bills, contact your local utility provider and register under the Cold Weather Rule. This state regulation prohibits Missouri utilities from shutting off their customers' service when the temperature is below 32 degrees. For questions about the Cold Weather Rule, contact the Missouri Attorney General's office at (800) 392-8222

Also available is the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which provides assistance for home heating and cooling. LIHEAP is federally funded but implemented at the state level. For more information on LIHEAP, contact Jeanna Machon of the Missouri Division of Family Services at (573) 526-4836, via

e-mail at [Jeanna.L.Machon@dss.mo.gov](mailto:Jeanna.L.Machon@dss.mo.gov), or visit [www.dss.state.mo.us/dfs/liheap.htm](http://www.dss.state.mo.us/dfs/liheap.htm).

For further assistance in the St. Louis area, contact:

- Human Development Corporation of St. Louis: Jaque Hutchinson, (314) 754-4485; Lorie Williams, (314) 754-4591
- St. Joseph Center: Sister Marie Charles Buford, (314) 351-6407
- Lutheran Family Services: (314) 787-5100
- Heat Up St. Louis: Urban League, (314) 652-6954
- Energy Care: (314) 773-5900
- Human Development Corp.: (314) 535-7607
- Salvation Army: (314) 534-1250
- St. Vincent de Paul Society: (314) 531-2183
- Urban League Outreach Center: (314) 615-3600 or (314) 388-9840

## *Senator Dougherty Sponsors Gubernatorial Appointees*



Sen. Patrick Dougherty sponsors Edward Martin Jr. for the St. Louis Board of Election Commissioners.



Sen. Patrick Dougherty sponsors the gubernatorial appointment of Clarence Dula to the St. Louis Board of Election Commissioners.

During this legislative session, Senator Dougherty also sponsored David Charles Campbell, M.D., for the Drug

Utilization Review Board and Jerry Hunter for the Regional Convention and Sports Complex Authority.

### **Hold The Phone:** *Get Your Name On Missouri's "No Call" List Today!*

The No Call List is a list of residential telephone numbers of Missourians who have indicated to the Attorney General's Office that they don't want to be called at home by telemarketers. The law prohibits telemarketers from calling households that have been added to the list, with some exceptions that have been written into the law. You can add your name to the No Call List by calling toll free (866) 662-2551 or by registering on the Attorney General's Web site at [www.moago.org](http://www.moago.org)



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