

Senator Kevin Engler

District 3

2005 Legislative Survey Results

1 TAX INCREASES

A. Increasing taxes has been suggested as a way to jump start declining state revenues. Proponents argue that tax increases are needed to prevent cuts to social services and provide additional funds to local schools. Opponents believe taxpayers already pay enough in taxes and government needs to be more responsible with taxpayer money.

I do not want any additional taxes.	809	67%
I would support additional statewide taxes in order to maintain current levels of state services.	289	24%
No response.	106	9%

B. If the Legislature were to place a tax increase on the ballot, please rank (1-6) your level of support for the following types of taxes, with 1 being the tax you would most likely support.

Sales:

1: 128 11%	2: 150 12%	3: 258 21%		
4: 119 10%	5: 77 6%	6: 139 12%	NR: 333	28%

Property Taxes:

1: 14 1%	2: 16 1%	3: 64 5%		
4: 119 10%	5: 214 18%	6: 411 34%	NR: 366	30%

Income Taxes:

1: 31 3%	2: 56 5%	3: 104 9%		
4: 152 13%	5: 215 18%	6: 295 25%	NR: 351	29%

Corporate Income Taxes:

1: 333 28%	2: 280 23%	3: 111 9%		
4: 71 6%	5: 34 3%	6: 62 5%	NR: 313	26%

Gasoline Taxes:

1: 35 3%	2: 44 4%	3: 142 12%		
4: 230 19%	5: 156 13%	6: 243 20%	NR: 354	29%

Cigarette/Alcohol Taxes:

1: 465 39%	2: 212 18%	3: 66 5%		
4: 33 3%	5: 22 2%	6: 91 8%	NR: 315	26%

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2 STATE BUDGET

Recent state budgets have suffered from difficult economic times. Short-term state revenues will likely not keep pace with current levels of state spending, requiring further cuts in the state budget.

Please rank (1-10) the service areas listed below in the order you would most like to see them protected from state budget cuts, with 1 being your highest priority:

Corrections:

1:	60	5%	2:	36	3%	3:	58	5%	4:	76	6%	5:	76	6%
6:	107	9%	7:	95	8%	8:	121	10%	9:	137	11%	10:	319	26%
												NR:	118	10%

Economic Development:

1:	53	4%	2:	67	6%	3:	78	6%	4:	90	7%	5:	113	9%
6:	124	10%	7:	112	9%	8:	152	13%	9:	166	14%	10:	133	11%
												NR:	115	10%

Elementary & Secondary Education:

1:	466	39%	2:	161	13%	3:	113	9%	4:	82	7%	5:	67	6%
6:	45	4%	7:	45	4%	8:	49	4%	9:	41	3%	10:	33	3%
												NR:	101	8%

Environmental Protection:

1:	58	5%	2:	60	5%	3:	62	5%	4:	71	6%	5:	107	9%
6:	116	10%	7:	124	10%	8:	119	10%	9:	165	14%	10:	210	17%
												NR:	112	9%

Health:

1:	272	23%	2:	195	16%	3:	190	16%	4:	137	11%	5:	104	9%
6:	74	6%	7:	54	4%	8:	43	4%	9:	15	1%	10:	21	2%
												NR:	97	8%

Higher Education:

1:	57	5%	2:	172	14%	3:	113	9%	4:	128	11%	5:	107	9%
6:	105	9%	7:	95	8%	8:	116	10%	9:	105	9%	10:	92	8%
												NR:	113	9%

Mental Health:

1:	51	4%	2:	87	7%	3:	107	9%	4:	106	9%	5:	142	12%
6:	127	11%	7:	130	11%	8:	133	11%	9:	114	9%	10:	91	8%
												NR:	116	10%

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2 STATE BUDGET (continued)

Public Safety:

1: 114	9%	2: 122	10%	3: 147	12%	4: 143	12%	5: 187	16%
6: 126	10%	7: 99	8%	8: 72	6%	9: 59	5%	10: 29	2%
								NR: 106	9%

Social Services:

1: 105	9%	2: 122	10%	3: 142	12%	4: 138	11%	5: 135	11%
6: 113	9%	7: 97	8%	8: 76	6%	9: 66	5%	10: 98	8%
								NR: 111	9%

Transportation:

1: 67	6%	2: 78	6%	3: 82	7%	4: 81	7%	5: 112	9%
6: 123	10%	7: 152	13%	8: 155	13%	9: 122	10%	10: 122	10%
								NR: 109	9%

3 EMISSIONS TESTING

To reduce air pollution in the St. Louis region and to meet federal standards for ozone reductions, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources launched a vehicle emissions testing program in April 2000. Proponents of the program say it has significantly reduced hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and oxides in nitrogen in the first four years of its existence. Ending the program before the contract is up in August 2007 will cost the state tens of millions of dollars in fees and penalties and could mean a cut in state services. Some believe the program is a financial burden and an inconvenience to those living in the St. Louis area. Others have proposed modifying the program by exempting from the emission tests certain vehicles, such as those that have a manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating in excess of 8,000 pounds within four years of the specific model year.

I support ending the vehicle emissions program immediately, even if this means a cut in state services.	588	49%
I support modifying the vehicle emissions program to lessen the financial burden and inconvenience of the program.	400	33%
I oppose ending the vehicle emissions program.	154	13%
No Response.	62	5%

4 TOLL ROADS

In 2004, voters approved Amendment 3, meaning motor vehicle fuel taxes and vehicle sales taxes must go directly toward constructing and improving highways, roads and bridges. However, more funding is needed to complete highway improvement projects across the state, such as adding a third lane to each side of I-70. Some contend that charging tolls for I-70 travelers is the only way to ensure that out-of-state motorists help pay for the wear their vehicles cause to the interstate. Opponents argue that Missourians should not have to pay a toll for what they have already paid through taxes.

I support the use of toll roads to fund only the building of new highways and bridges.	113	9%
I support the use of toll roads to fund building new highways and bridges and improving existing roads and bridges.	259	22%
I oppose the use of toll roads in Missouri.	526	44%
I support the use of toll roads only if some of the funds were used locally (i.e. to make Hwy. 21 and Hwy. 67 four lanes to Desoto and Arkansas, respectively).	263	22%
No Response.	43	4%

5 EMINENT DOMAIN

Eminent domain laws allow local governments to buy out private property for public use, which traditionally has been defined as improving public infrastructure. But the definition of "public use" has become contentious in light of a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling giving private developers the right to seize property from private-property owners in the name of overall economic development. Some say eminent domain laws spur urban renewal, such as turning an old building into a public library. Opponents of the laws contend that the rights of private property owners are being exploited by projects lacking a significant public need.

Eminent domain laws should enable any private or public entity to take private property if the public would benefit in any way.	9	1%
Eminent domain laws should enable private developers to seize private property for use in commercial projects (i.e. grocery store, shopping mall, etc.) if the public would benefit from an increase in tax dollars received.	15	1%
Eminent domain laws should allow only a government entity to take private property for such things as a highway, bridge, public library or government building, which would benefit all citizens.	654	54%
Eminent domain laws should not allow anyone to take private property for any reason, even if the public would benefit.	469	39%
No Response.	57	5%

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6 STEM-CELL RESEARCH

Research involving human embryonic stem cells is a complicated and controversial issue involving medical, political and religious considerations. Embryonic stem cells are made through somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT), a process in which the nucleus of an unfertilized egg is removed and replaced with the nucleus of another cell from a human body. The egg is then stimulated to divide, just as it would if fertilized by a sperm, and the embryo's stem cells are then harvested. Some contend that this process could someday lead to cures for many diseases, but so far, there are no promising results. Many believe that life begins at conception and that the embryo is indeed a human life, so therefore tampering with the embryos is killing an unborn human being.

Do you support human embryonic stem cell research?

Yes.	531	44%	No.	375	31%	Needs more info.	271	23%	NR.	27	2%
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7 GAMING REVENUE

Excursion gaming boats in Missouri have generally been quite profitable. Some believe that they should pay a larger share of their revenues to the state through increased boarding fees or higher tax rates. Another possible way to increase revenue for Missouri would be to repeal the \$500 loss limit, which was intended to protect chronic gamblers, but has discouraged out-of-state high rollers from traveling to Missouri. At this time, Missouri is the only state with a loss limit.

I support increasing the tax rate or boarding fees for excursion gaming boats and repealing the \$500 loss limit.	806	67%
I oppose increasing the tax rate or boarding fees and repealing the \$500 loss limit.	284	24%
No Response.	114	9%

8 INSURANCE REFORM

The medical malpractice insurance premiums our doctors must pay have increased significantly over the past few years. This has been particularly harmful to rural doctors, forcing many of them to stop practicing or move their practices to St. Louis or another state. Insurance companies can double or triple medical malpractice premiums without providing a reason or seeking authorization. Insurance companies may even increase rates on doctors who have never had a claim filed against them.

Should Missouri lawmakers pass laws preventing insurance providers from imposing drastic rate increases on Missouri physicians?

Yes.	1,066	89%	No.	69	6%	No Response.	69	6%
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9 *PROPERTY TAX RELIEF*

Property taxes increase every two years. Many have suggested property tax relief for senior citizens who are on fixed incomes. The current "Homestead Act" provides for limited property tax relief for senior citizens.

Do you support or oppose the following:

Expansion and extension of the "Homestead Act"

Support.	869	72%	Oppose.	110	9%	No Response.	225	19%
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A "freeze" of property tax rates for senior citizens over the age of 62.

Support.	959	80%	Oppose.	141	12%	No Response.	104	9%
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Total records: 1,204