

**STATE
SENATOR**

JACK GOODMAN

CAPITOL REPORT 2006

INSIDE:

Virtual School

**Property
Rights**

**Affordable
Health Care**

Jessica's Law





Dear Friends in the 29th District,

Thank you for the opportunity to work for you in the Missouri Senate. We have prepared this publication to keep you informed of the progress being made on your behalf in your Capitol.

We have tackled many important and difficult issues in Missouri. Dramatic improvements to Missouri laws have brought a wealth of new opportunities to the people of our state.

In less than two years, by reforming bad laws, we have transformed Missouri from being the state that led the nation in job losses and bankruptcy filings to being a national leader in job creation. We have created more than 45,000 new jobs since January 2005.

By creating jobs for Missourians who are eager to work, we have moved people toward independence. With more people working, more people are contributing to Missouri's tax revenue, and fewer people are consuming state revenue in the form of welfare. Missouri now has the fewest people receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (welfare) since the program was introduced in 1996, when Missouri spent more than \$257 million on this cash assistance. Last year, Missouri spent just \$134 million.

Increased job opportunities and an improved economy have led to a budget turnaround. Two years ago, our state had a budget shortage of almost \$1 billion. Without raising taxes, we have increased state revenues to overcome the shortage and, already this year, experienced a budget surplus of nearly \$300 million.

The result of these new improvements to Missouri policy may be the greatest increase in state revenue without a tax increase in Missouri's history. During the past year, individual income tax collections increased more than 10 percent, from \$4.86 billion to \$5.35 billion, while corporate income and franchise tax collections increased 28 percent, from \$473.8 million to \$606.7 million. It is also noteworthy that these increases occurred while Missouri has not collected an estate tax.

I am excited about these revolutionary improvements to the quality of life in our great state. Thank you again for allowing me to serve as your senator. Please contact my office anytime you need assistance or want to share an idea. My contact information can be found on page 7.

Respectfully,

Jack Goodman

SEN. GOODMAN'S COMMITTEES

Ways and Means, Vice-Chair



Aging, Families, Mental and Public Health



Economic Development, Tourism and
Local Government



Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence



Joint Committee on Economic
Development Policy and Planning



Senate Interim Committee on the Missouri
State Public Defender System, Chair



Senate Interim Committee on Adoption
Promotion and Child Support Enforcement



Senate Interim Committee on
Certificate of Need

Protecting Property Owners



Returning eminent domain to its original intent

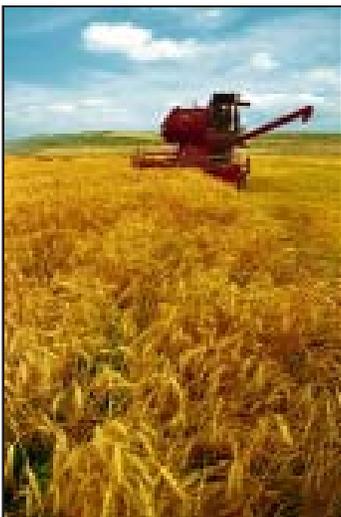
The Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution makes it illegal for governments to take private property for public use without just compensation. While this amendment has historically protected citizens from abuse through eminent domain, some recent high court rulings have led many to the conclusion that this protection is being eroded.

In 2005, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that states have broad discretion in defining their own powers of eminent domain. According to the ruling, states could even allow small municipal governments to take privately owned land and give it to commercial developers! In other words, if some wealthy commercial developer wanted to tear down your house and build a shopping mall in its place, all they had to do was get the city government to take it through an eminent domain action and give it to them. Obviously this is not what the Founding Fathers intended. The use of eminent domain is necessary in some situations, such as to build roads and bridges, but allowing the government to take private land through eminent domain and convey it to private developers simply to generate income is not acceptable.

This year, we passed HB 1944 to prevent these kinds of abuses from occurring in Missouri. This bill was a huge step towards securing the rights of Missouri's families and preventing abuse of eminent domain.

The legislation:

- Prohibits eminent domain from being used in projects solely for purposes of economic development.
- Prevents farmland from being designated as "blighted."
- Compensates those who have had their homes taken by a condemning authority with 25 percent more than the home's value.
- Includes a heritage-value provision stating that homes, farms or businesses that have been in the same extended family for at least 50 years will automatically receive an additional 50 percent of the land's value.



Securing the Future of **AGRICULTURE**

Sen. Goodman believes that for agriculture to prosper in a rapidly changing world, new educational opportunities must be made available to aspiring young farmers. These educational opportunities must expand and deepen the young farmers' understanding of traditional methods, foster the development of mentoring relationships and provide exposure to technologies that will increase the productivity and profitability of modern farms.

SB 1222, written and sponsored by Sen. Goodman, would have gone a long way toward fulfilling these goals by creating the "Farm Mentoring and Education Program." This educational and developmental initiative would have been administered throughout the state by the University of Missouri Agriculture Extension and would have provided financial resources necessary to administer the new program. After passing unanimously in the Senate, the measure got bogged down in the last steps of its passage through the House. Sen. Goodman plans to reintroduce the bill next session.



An Innovative Approach to Education

Students with unique needs will soon have a new and innovative way to get an education thanks to SB 912, a bill sponsored by Sen. Goodman. The bill establishes a virtual curriculum for Missouri's public schools by utilizing the Internet and other cutting-edge technologies.

The virtual school will be held to the same educational standards applied to every other public school district by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Students enrolled in the virtual school will use a home computer to access daily lesson plans that teach the same concepts being learned by other students of that grade level.

The program provides for personal interaction between teachers and online

students via chat rooms, phone calls and frequent personal visits to the students' homes.

The virtual school will not replace traditional public schools or serve as a back-door strategy for bringing homeschooling under the direct supervision of the state. Rather, the program is designed to provide educational opportunities for students who may have difficulty reaching their maximum potential in a traditional classroom setting.

Gifted children can use the virtual school to take advanced courses not offered in their district, and students who are homebound for medical reasons can utilize the virtual school to receive an uninterrupted education.

In short, Missouri's new virtual school will allow students to learn at their own pace, maximize their potential, track their progress and get a first-class education.

SB 912 was signed into law this past June and will become effective for the 2007-2008 school year. First-year enrollment will be limited to 500 students.



Sen. Goodman and Sen. John Loudon discuss legislation on the Senate floor.



Keeping our children **SAFE**

With the passage of HB 1698, the Legislature sends a clear message to sexual predators who harm Missouri children.

The main provisions of the bill are:

-  **Mandatory Prison Sentences**
Those convicted of forcible rape or sodomy of a child under the age of 12 will be sentenced to life in prison and must serve at least 30 years before they will be considered for parole.
-  **Sexual Assault by a Teacher**
Those who can commit the crime of sexual contact with a student now includes a student teacher, employee of the school, volunteer, or a person employed by a contractor providing services to the school.
-  **Cyber-Crimes Unit**
A panel has been created to distribute grants to law enforcement task forces to track down cyber predators.
-  **Sexual Trafficking of a Child**
Those accused of sexual trafficking of a child younger than 12 years of age will face a felony charge punishable by life in prison without eligibility for parole for 25 years.



In today's hectic world, families find it harder and harder to spend time together to focus on family activities. Sen. Goodman sponsored Senate Bill 1114 to help address this problem.

This bill would have set a later school start date, providing that school could not start before the Friday prior to the last Monday in August. Due to work commitments, summer camps, summer school and other activities, many families can only fit in vacations at the end of summer. With many schools starting in early to mid-August, families are losing the opportunity to take vacations together and participate in other productive, educational opportunities. Most Missouri students also must miss school if they want to participate in the educational programs at the state fair.



Many teachers have voiced strong support of the bill, explaining that starting school in the heat of August, when it is

frequently hotter than 90 degrees, is a waste of time and resources. Many schools release early on these days anyway, and if not, few students are able to concentrate and retain information under these conditions.

One school district in Oklahoma moved its start date to after the August heat subsided and saved approximately \$500,000 in utilities for the year because of reduced need for air conditioning. These funds were then available for educational materials and teacher salaries.

A recent study conducted by the University of Missouri and the Department of Economic Development found that the state loses \$1.58 million per day in tax revenue generated by tourism for every day that school is in session before Labor Day.

The bill gave local school districts control over setting their own holidays, workdays, seasonal breaks and testing weeks. The bill also provided a mechanism for school districts to start earlier if approved by the local voters. Sen. Goodman will introduce this legislation again next session.

Responsibility Behind the Wheel



When parents place children on a school bus, they should be confident their children will get to school and back home safely. The employment of school bus drivers who have unsafe driving habits

places our children at risk. To help address this problem, the Senate passed SB 584, a bill designed to prevent people with a history of drunk driving from operating a school bus. Due to time constraints, the House was unable to pass the bill.

Specifically, the bill forbade the issuance or renewal of a school bus endorsement to any applicant who has been convicted of any traffic offense related to driving while intoxicated.

The measure also increased the penalties for school bus drivers who are convicted of operating a school bus while their licenses are revoked. Violation of this measure would have been punishable by one year in jail and a fine of \$1,000. Lawmakers might reconsider this issue next year.

A Smart Investment

Last year the Legislature drafted a new school funding formula to help provide a more equitable education to students regardless of where they live in Missouri. The FY 2007 budget features a \$127 million increase for the K-12 public school funding formula and \$15 million for the Small Schools Grant Program. These two figures represent the additional funding called for by the revised school funding formula.

For the 2007 Fiscal Year, Sen. Goodman was instrumental in securing nearly \$90 million for schools in the 29th Senate District. The Legislature also continued its commitment to post-K-12 education by enacting a 2 percent funding increase for public universities and community colleges – the first significant boost for higher education in several years.

Missouri's students remain a top priority for Sen. Goodman, who understands that investing in education is investing in the future of our state.

DEFENDING OUR

HOMES

Most of us believe that if an intruder is in our home, we have the legal right to use all necessary force to get the intruder out. Unfortunately, that is not true in Missouri. Although the occupant of a home may use such force while the intruder is breaking in, the law puts the occupant at a severe disadvantage once the intruder is inside. The occupant then has a duty to retreat or use less than full force to remove the intruder.

Sen. Goodman finds this policy unacceptable and filed SB 1111 to give law-abiding Missourians the right to defend themselves, their families and their homes from criminals who could do them harm.

As a husband and father he assumes that anyone who breaks into his home is a threat to his family. He would do all he could

to eliminate that threat and believes all Missourians should have a right to react the same way. Sen. Goodman cited cases of law-abiding occupants of homes being sued and prosecuted for injuring criminals who broke into their homes.

“The law should protect the innocent, not the criminal. Imagine that your family is asleep, someone breaks in, and you defend your family,” Sen. Goodman said. “Then imagine that you get sentenced to jail and the intruder’s family sues you and wins, because you defended your family. The current state of things is absurd, and we must change it.”

He will be bringing the legislation up again next session to provide full criminal and civil immunity to law-abiding home occupants who use force against home intruders.

A Credit for Volunteer Heroes

Volunteer firefighters form the backbone of disaster preparedness in many parts of rural Missouri. Sen. Goodman introduced SB 1006 to help fire departments recruit and retain more of the firefighters who are so vital to the safety of our state. The bill would have allowed firefighters to receive a \$200 tax credit if they complete at least 12 hours of an approved training program within the tax year the credit was claimed. Individuals who complete 30 hours or more of additional training would have been eligible to claim a \$400 tax credit in any year that 12 hours of training were completed.

This tax credit would be a way for Missouri to say “thank you” to our volunteer firefighters for their courage and selfless devotion to public safety. Although session ended before the legislation could be finally passed, Sen. Goodman plans on reintroducing the measure next year.



Sen. Goodman and Sen. Rita Heard Days talk about a bill that is being debated on the Senate floor.

Immigration Reform

The Missouri Senate made a strong effort this year to address illegal immigration. SB 1250 would have given local law enforcement a number of tools to combat this growing problem.

For example, the bill would enable the Missouri State Highway Patrol to receive federal training from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to learn the best ways to enforce federal immigration laws on highways and interstates in Missouri. The measure also would have given trained highway patrol members access to the federal database containing names of individuals who have violated their visas.

Furthermore, the bill prohibited illegal immigrants from receiving taxpayer-funded assistance ranging from Medicaid to education. The bill also created penalties for employers who knowingly employ undocumented illegal aliens.

SB 1250 was passed by the Senate, but failed to make it through the House. Although the measure did not become law, it helped create a solid foundation for future efforts in the area of immigration reform.

Addressing the Health-Care Crisis in Missouri

Increasing Access to Health Insurance

This year Sen. Goodman and Rep. Jay Wasson worked together to pass legislation allowing small and large businesses to pool together for the purpose of purchasing health insurance for their employees.

HB 1827, sponsored by Rep. Wasson in the House and handled by Sen. Goodman in the Senate, was based on a pilot project recently conducted in southwest Missouri. The project, which joined small and large employers as one entity to purchase health insurance, produced dramatic results. The largest employer to participate in the project saw a reduction of 18 percent in health insurance premiums. The smaller employers saved up to 40 percent.

HB 1827 provides a much stronger bargaining position for small employers. Risk will be spread over many more insured people, bringing in benefits of an economy of scale, which drives down the cost of insurance. Sen. Goodman thinks this is one of the most rewarding bills he has worked on. "I know it will make a real difference in the lives of thousands of working Missourians who need health insurance," he said.



Sen. Goodman, with his son on the Senate dais, knows how important it is for families to have access to health care.

Cracking Down on Medicaid Fraud

Fraud committed by Medicaid providers costs taxpayers up to \$575 million per year. Such fraud includes overstating labor, billing multiple times for a single service and illegitimate prescriptions.

This year, the Senate passed SB 1210 to crack down on this abuse. The bill increased the penalties for those who commit Medicaid fraud and required that such persons serve at least 85 percent of their sentence before being eligible for parole. Violators would be banned from billing in the Medicaid system for 10 years. The bill also included protections for those who report persons committing Medicaid fraud and provisions to protect providers from false accusations.

Although the Senate passed the bill, it did not get through the House this session. Lawmakers indicated this reform will be addressed again soon.

Commenting on this issue, Sen. Goodman said, "It is imperative that we protect taxpayer dollars, especially when we see violators stealing resources that are earmarked for Missouri's neediest and most vulnerable citizens."

CONTACT SENATOR GOODMAN

If you have any legislative concerns or questions, feel free to contact Sen. Goodman's office.

You can call the Capitol office at (573) 751-2234, the district office at (417) 466-3731, fax to (573) 526-9808, or e-mail jack.goodman@senate.mo.gov. Feel free to stop by his office, Room 331A, at the State Capitol.

Sen. Goodman's Senate Web site:
www.senate.mo.gov/goodman

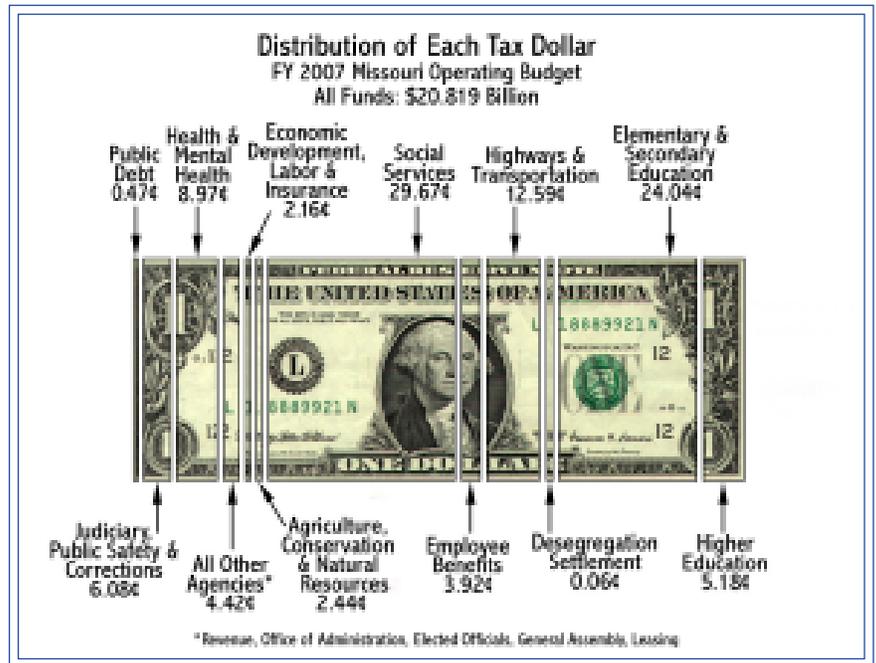


\$\$ MO MONEY \$\$

Each year, the General Assembly must determine how to budget taxpayer money for the next fiscal year. This session, the Legislature passed a \$20.8 billion spending plan reflecting responsible financial planning.

The 2007 Fiscal Year Budget allots:

- \$90 million to schools in the 29th Senate District.
- A 2 percent increase for state colleges and universities.
- A \$400 million increase for construction and maintenance of roads and bridges.
- \$6.2 billion for the Dept. of Social Services — 4 percent more than last year.
- A \$200 million increase for Medicaid.
- A 4 percent pay raise for state employees, except elected officials.
- \$711,105 for Roaring River State Park; \$379,834 for Table Rock State Park; and \$28,332 for Big Sugar Creek State Park.



- More than \$10 million for the Missouri Rehabilitation Center and \$9.4 million to an area veterans home.

State Senator Jack Goodman
201 W. Capitol Ave.
Room 331A, State Capitol
Jefferson City, MO 65101

PRESORTED STANDARD
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Permit No. 220