

Report from Senator David G. Klindt

February 9, 2006

Working Hard for Tomorrow

I was pleased to help welcome to the Capitol this week a large number of Missouri corn growers – including several from the Great Northwest. They were in Jefferson City promoting a program to make wider use of ethanol in Missouri fuels – a program I wholeheartedly support.

Missouri's ethanol processing facilities have quickly become a major contributor to the state's economy. The three existing plants at Macon, Malta Bend, and Craig, plus the additional plant at Laddonia will bring Missouri's ethanol production capacity to 156 million gallons per year. Additional plants and production increases are on the drawing board.

The construction phase of these four plants has already created more than 1,800 construction-related jobs. Operating the plants will create 154 full-time jobs with a payroll of \$14 million. Once all four plants are fully on-line, they will need almost 55 million bushels of corn for production, boosting the value of the corn crop at the farm level by \$41 million.

The construction of two additional ethanol plants and the expansion of some of the existing plants will bring Missouri's production to 350 million gallons per year. At that level, more than 250 Missourians will go to work each day making ethanol from Missouri corn, with a payroll of \$25 million. The plants will need 124 million bushels of corn, boosting the crop value by \$73 million. Our ethanol industry will generate an extra \$63 million in state revenues each year – that's more money for schools, better resources for fighting crime, and more investment in smoother, safer roads.

Plus, I'm aware of sophisticated research underway that will make the production of ethanol more efficient and profitable. We need to do this.

Public Service Commission Chairman Jeff Davis this week unveiled a proposed rule designed to make sure utility customers who conserve are able to reap 100% of the savings they generate. A couple of utilities in Missouri stepped off on a misguided path to try and recover some of the revenue lost to conservation through surcharges on their customers. As Chairman of the Commerce Committee, I immediately intervened and insisted there be no penalty for conserving energy. I'm glad Chairman Davis agrees.

You may have read or heard about some politicians making claims that utilities were already charging customers for conservation. That was nothing but hot air in an election year. No surcharge for customer conservation has appeared on customer bills.

The Missouri Senate this week passed and sent to the House a bill creating the Healthcare Technology Fund to promote technological advances and improve patient care. Hey, if Jiffy Lube can use computers to make your life better, so can the hospital.

We also advanced a bill aimed at making our system of public higher education more efficient and effective in preparing students for the workforce. It's all part of our job of working hard for tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul G. Sticht". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "P".