



Michael R. Gibbons
Senate President Pro Tem

MISSOURI GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rod Jetton
Speaker of the House

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislature Approves \$20.8 Billion State Operating Budget *Lawmakers Support \$142 Million Increase for K-12 Funding Formula*

JEFFERSON CITY - Approving funding to run critical functions of state government with an emphasis on improving education, the Missouri General Assembly today approved thirteen budget bills totaling \$20.8 billion for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The bills include a \$127 million increase for the school foundation formula, as well as an additional \$15 million to fund the Small Schools Grant program. Universities and community colleges received increases of 2 percent, marking the first increases for higher education in several years.

Senator Chuck Gross, R-St. Charles, chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee and handled the budget bills in the Senate.

“We made a commitment last year to fund a new school funding formula that gives every child, no matter where they live, an equal opportunity for a great education,” Gross said. “This year we met that commitment by dedicating an additional \$142 million dollars to meet the funding phase-in schedule, plus we were able to invest in higher education.”

Representative Allen Icet, R-Wildwood, first-year chair of the House Budget Committee, focused on giving Missourians the most value for their tax dollars.

“With Missouri spending billions of dollars every year, it’s important to focus on giving our citizens the most for their money,” Icet said. “This new budget ensures that our children will get the best education possible and that Missouri’s economy will continue surging for years to come.”

Healthcare spending also saw large increases with \$25 million going to fund the new Healthcare Technology Fund as well as more than \$200 million dedicated to cover the growth in Medicaid. Plus \$20 million will go to continue Medicaid coverage for 3,000 disabled employees who would like to work, but risk losing their current Medicaid benefits.

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The Healthcare Technology Fund will be used to bring Missouri's healthcare services into the 21st century by investing in electronic medical records, e-prescribing, telemedicine and tele-monitoring.

Senate President Pro Tem Michael R. Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, commended Gross for his leadership on the budget process, especially in bringing new healthcare opportunities to Missourians.

"Every person in Missouri should have more available, affordable healthcare and Sen. Gross made sure the funding for the first phase of our healthcare reform efforts was in place," Gibbons said. "Chuck has worked with all senators to shape a budget that protects our state's children, especially their education and healthcare, by giving the best services taxpayers can afford."

House Speaker Rod Jetton, R-Marble Hill, commended Icet for his dedication and commitment for his first effort in leading the state budget process through the House.

"Rep. Icet handled his first state budget with exceptional professionalism," Jetton said. "Next year's budget provides significant increases in elementary and secondary education, as well as Medicaid funding. With Rep. Icet's leadership, we were able to craft a budget that was passed with significant bipartisan support and moves Missouri forward."

Lawmakers completed the budget two days before the deadline set by the state constitution. House Bill 1022, a budget spending bill that would determine how to allocate proceeds from the partial sale of loan assets sold by the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority, is still undergoing debate. It must also pass by the Friday, May 5, deadline.

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