



THE STOUFFER REPORT

Senator Bill Stouffer
Senate District 21

Capitol Building, Room 332
Jefferson City, MO 65101

For the Week of:
April 3, 2006

Contact: Aaron Baker
(573) 751-1507

The Promise of Agriculture

In many respects, this could be considered the “Year of the Farmer” in the Missouri General Assembly. Legislation is advancing in the House and Senate that would require 100 percent of the gasoline sold in Missouri to contain at least 10 percent ethanol, while another bill would target cattle rustling by making it a Class C felony. Additionally, the Senate Special Committee on Fuel, Waste and the Environment has begun holding hearings on ways to convert animal waste into an environmentally-friendly alternative fuel.

One of the most exciting proposals this session deals with corn-based ethanol. Senate Bill 569 would require 100 percent of gasoline sold in Missouri to be blended with at least 10 percent ethanol. This important legislation is a critical first step to providing Missourians with a locally refined fuel that is cost-competitive and better for the environment. SB 569 would also provide a big boost to the rural economy by spurring the construction of new ethanol production facilities. Construction is expected to begin this fall on a new ethanol plant in Laddonia, and there are plans to build the state’s fifth ethanol plant near the Ray and Carroll County border.

A recent University of Missouri economic impact study found ethanol production in Missouri is expected to reach 350 million gallons annually by the end of 2008. That translates into the creation of more than 5,600 jobs, generating \$63 million in tax revenue and injecting an estimated \$726 million into the state’s economy. SB 569 has been approved in committee and awaits debate on the Senate floor. Similar legislation is advancing in the House.

Another promising development with regards to alternative sources of energy is the formation of the Senate Special Committee on Fuel, Waste and the Environment. This committee is conducting hearings to explore the feasibility of converting human and animal waste into environmentally friendly alternative sources of energy. The committee is also charged with working to protect Missouri's environment, solving odor issues that plague some of our largest producers, and finding ways to sustain rural economic development. I am honored to have been named to this important committee, which held its first meeting last week.

One troubling issue that needs to be addressed this session is the recent rash of cattle rustling in Missouri. Last year, the Missouri Highway Patrol reported cattle were stolen in 29 Missouri counties, costing cattle producers an estimated \$500,000 in losses. Last month, the Missouri Cattlemen's Association increased its reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of cattle rustlers to \$5,000. We are also dealing with this issue in the Legislature.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by email at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

-END-