



Office of Jason Crowell State Senator

The Crowell Connection

Senator Jason Crowell proudly represents the people of Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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Working to Bring Cheaper Gas to Missouri

I paid \$67 to fill up my truck to drive 242 miles to Jefferson City this week. High gas prices affect all of us and have the potential to cripple our economy. Nearly 60-percent of our fuel needs have to be fulfilled by other nations, and these countries supplying the oil are often the hosts to our enemies in the War on Terror.

In looking out for the best interest of Missourians for today, tomorrow and down the road, I helped pass legislation this week that will provide some relief. House Bill 1270 creates a standard that all unleaded gasoline sold in Missouri contain a 10-percent ethanol blend by January 1, 2008. Minnesota, Montana, Washington and Hawaii already have 10-percent standards, and Minnesota is expected to soon increase its standard to 20 percent. The move toward ethanol makes a lot of sense considering all of the benefits of using a renewable fuel.



For starters, the high oxygen level in ethanol-based fuel allows it to burn cleaner and reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 30-percent. Aside from being environmentally friendly, ethanol is renewable, so with increased production and demand we will see lower prices on gas. In fact, it is estimated that without ethanol in the marketplace today, gas prices would be 14.6 percent higher. Given that the average price for a gallon of gas today in Missouri is \$2.75, that means that without ethanol, a gallon of gas would be \$3.15.

Because ethanol is derived from corn, the state's agricultural market will benefit greatly, and as a result, our

“shifting our source

overall economy will be stimulated by job growth and an enlarged tax base. According to an economic study by the University of Missouri, creating the new standard will provide nearly 3,000 jobs, generate more than \$400 million in economic activity and bring in \$31 million in tax revenues each year. As a whole, by shifting our source of fuel to one that is renewable and less costly, we will reduce our reliance on foreign oil.

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Over the course of the next year and a half, retailers and farmers will have adequate time to prepare for the implementation of the ethanol standard. To meet the 10-percent standard, Missouri needs to produce 315 million gallons of ethanol each year, which is 200 million more than it currently produces annually. In November, construction will begin on a plant in Sikeston that will have the capacity to produce 100 million gallons of ethanol each year. The \$175 million plant will be a tremendous asset to the area as it will use corn from the Bootheel and employ approximately 75 people. The plant is scheduled for completion in December 2006 or January 2007, which is in line with the Jan. 1, 2008, start date of the new standard.

This measure is not the end-all solution to our growing energy concerns, but it is a significant step in the right direction. By passing this measure, we are closer to cleaner water, purer air, higher levels of energy independence, a healthier agricultural market and more affordable fuel.

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.jasoncrowell.com>.

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