



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
Week of January 16, 2006**

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Former U.S. House Speaker Addresses Missouri Senate

JEFFERSON CITY – The Missouri Senate was honored this week to host former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who talked to Senators, family members and friends about the coming transformation in health care.

Gingrich, who was instrumental in the move to a managed health care system in the 1990's, now says a new health care model is needed for the country which incorporates the latest technology.

The former Speaker's comments come on the heels of Governor Blunt's call for the creation of a Healthcare Technology Fund to ensure that the basic technology that is pervasive throughout society is a part of the improved delivery of healthcare services to Missourians. In his State of the State Address, Governor Blunt said the funding will involve multi-year projects that will explore new and innovative ways that technology can improve the delivery of care, reduce administrative burdens and eliminate waste and fraud.

"We're at the edge of a new period in how we think about and solve the health challenges of the United States," Gingrich said. "And I think part of what keeps us from getting there is that we are so overwhelmed by everything we have inherited from the past, whether it's malpractice fights or it's Medicaid or Medicare or any of the variety of interest groups that surround health care, we get so absorbed everyday in those challenges."

Gingrich says there are three major components to transforming the current healthcare system:

- The healthcare system must be centered on the individual or family;
- The system should move from acute care to focus on preventive care and wellness;
- The system must incorporate the latest technology.

Gingrich says people will resist changes to the healthcare system they have become accustomed to, but he says the changes he is recommending will both save people's lives and save money.

Legislators are working with Governor Blunt in exploring a similar revamping for Missouri's Medicaid program for the poor and the state's health care system in general.

The Second Regular Session of the 93rd Missouri General Assembly will run through Friday, May 12.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.mo.gov