



# THE STOUFFER REPORT

**Senator Bill Stouffer**  
**Capitol Building, Room 332**

**Senate District 21**  
**Jefferson City, MO 65101**

**For the Week of:**  
November 26, 2007

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## **Meeting the State's Medical Needs, Honoring Tax Payers, and Sustaining Providers**

During a routine doctor's visit, Sue Ellen and I heard an inspiring story. Our doctor shared with us the many changes he has seen in patients due to reforms to the state's Medicaid system over the last three years. He told us about a local woman who was removed from the old Medicaid program who is now employed, showing signs of self worth and pride that coincides with meaningful employment. Our physician said the woman looks better, feels better, and has a new outlook on life. To me, there is nothing more rewarding than hearing about able-bodied citizens working to improve their way of life and focusing on their health and wellness.

In 2005, the governor had to make a tough decision when faced with the fiscal challenges in our state. Missouri was nearly upside down financially and Medicaid was almost bankrupt. The governor's decisions have really helped turn around our state and after hearing about what my doctor is seeing first-hand, possibly turning around our society.

Last session, the Legislature passed [Senate Bill 577](#) that authorizes the improved health care access plan for Missouri. Mo HealthNet replaced the failing Medicaid system and improved health care for low income Missourians. The new plan creates an innovative health care system to deliver 21<sup>st</sup> Century health care to the people of our state. Lawmakers recognized the importance of personal attention as well as providing citizens with a personalized health plan that promotes prevention, health, and wellness. This plan not only provides quality care for the people of Missouri, it makes a valuable and responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

After passage of SB 577, the governor launched the Insure Missouri health care plan that helps Missouri's lower-income, uninsured workers buy health insurance. Insure Missouri

provides new access to affordable health insurance for nearly 200,000 people in the state, and 130,000 could be enrolled by July 2008.

Under Insure Missouri, health care coverage will be affordable. This program was authorized by legislation passed by the General Assembly and signed by the governor this year and will begin offering the first phase of benefits in spring of 2008.

The General Assembly is constantly looking for ways Missourians can better access quality health care. We've come a long way since 2005 and things are only going to get better with improved health care through technology, better health outcomes, and a greater emphasis on furthering the fight against fraud and abuse of taxpayer resources. The Legislature will continue to work to meet Missourian's medical needs, sustain important providers in our state, and honor hard working taxpayers.

For more information about Mo HealthNet or Insure Missouri, please visit the Missouri Department of Social Services Mo HealthNet Division at <http://www.dss.mo.gov/mhd/index.htm>. If you have questions or comments about any other issue, please call my office toll free (866) 768-3987 or send me an e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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