



Office of Jason Crowell State Senator

The Crowell Connection

Senator Jason Crowell – Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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Gearing Up For Another Successful Session

On Jan. 3, state lawmakers returned to the Capitol to convene the First Regular Session of the 94th General Assembly. This year, three issues are at the forefront of our legislative agenda. Higher education, health care and cutting taxes will be in the spotlight this year as we build on reforms made in recent years past.

INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE



Because access to quality health care is not a luxury, but a necessity, we expect to create ways to increase access for the underinsured and uninsured. The state-funded Medicaid program, which costs \$6 billion a year and provides health care to more than 800,000 Missourians, is in need of reform. We want to

create a new access to health care program and implement procedures to promote healthier lifestyles, streamline services, crack down on fraud, offer incentives to small businesses to provide access to quality health care. I also will be advocating for a statewide insurance pool that any individual or employer can join, with an income-based sliding scale for premiums and co-pays.

CUT STATE INCOME TAXES ON SOCIAL SECURITY

The state's revenue has increased 9 percent, which created a \$300 million surplus. As it looks now, a similar surplus might occur for this fiscal year. This money is yours it does not belong to government. One initiative in particular I support is doing away with state income taxes that retirees pay on their Social Security benefits. By eliminating this tax the state of Missouri would put approximately \$100 million into the pockets of seniors or the equivalent of more than \$49 a month per senior citizen.

MAKING EDUCATION A TOP PRIORITY

Investing in access to world class education is investing in the future. This year, we will focus on how to improve our state system of higher education. In doing this we will consider funding new scholarships and increasing financial aid with the goal being to enable as many Missouri high school students as possible to go to college.

In addition to these priorities that I share with the majority of lawmakers, I have filed several initiatives positively affecting southeast Missouri and the state as a whole. Some of my legislation aims to make Missouri roads safer, protect consumers and keep our children safe from sexual predators. I will further explain these and other measures in future columns as the session continues.

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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