



## MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the  
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# Work Begins on State Budget

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JEFFERSON CITY – The start of the next legislative session is more than two months away, but work has already started on the one thing lawmakers are constitutionally required to do: craft a state budget.

In fact, the process started even before work on the current budget was completed, since we need to make long-range plans for spending taxpayer dollars. At this point, the numbers look good, and we should be able to continue funding priorities such as more money for public schools, adequate healthcare and taking care of those who cannot take care of themselves.

Our state economy remains healthy. The September 2007 numbers show that for Fiscal Year 2008 (which began July 1) to date, general revenues have grown by 3.8 percent. Compared to September 2006, net general revenue collections for the month have increased by 5.8 percent. Other indicators of our state's healthy economy include a 2.6 percent increase in sales and use tax collections (showing consumers are buying goods and spending on services) and a 7.4 percent growth in individual income tax collections. Additionally, corporate income and corporate franchise tax collections are up 2.9 percent for the year. While this is good news for the state's economy, it's also good news for our state budget since the numbers are in line with the projections that were made when the current budget was crafted in the last legislative session.

However, there are some concerns that the economy could be slowing down. Staff members with the Senate Appropriations office question how much revenue will grow due to some weakness in the national housing market as well as concerns over the recent meltdown in

the sub-prime lending market. Still, I'm confident our economy has the strength to weather some possible economic turbulence.

The Senate Appropriations Committee will begin holding public hearings on the budget for FY 2009 on December 3, at 1 p.m. in Senate Committee Room 2 on the first floor of the Capitol. Those interested in testifying on budget issues should contact the Appropriations Staff toll free at 866-475-6083 or by e-mail at [public.testimony@senate.mo.gov](mailto:public.testimony@senate.mo.gov). For a complete listing of public hearings in the state senate, visit [www.senate.mo.gov/07info/hrings.htm](http://www.senate.mo.gov/07info/hrings.htm).

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](mailto:delbertscott@senate.mo.gov).

*Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.*