



JANUARY 5, 2007

This is my first Capitol Report of the new legislative session, which began Jan. 3, 2007. Since the end of last session, my staff and I have continued working full days for the people of the 29th, but have had the pleasure of doing it in the district. As we have continued the effort, traveling the district and in the district office, it has been nice to end most days at home with my family. That reward has been even sweeter since November 9, when our second son, Will, was born. Our older son, Jack Elliott, is a terrific big brother. Laura and I had our most wonderful holiday season together, enjoying each other and our boys.

The downside of such rich blessings comes when we must be apart. Although I am excited to resume the portion of my duties that take place in the Capitol, I must confess to some sadness at the thought of leaving my family again this session. They come to the Capitol with me sometimes, but with the long work days in Jefferson City, they don't usually get to see me enough to justify upsetting their routine.

I regained a healthy perspective on this dreaded separation this week. At the Governor's Prayer Breakfast, former U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft reminded us of the words of Luke 12:48, "To whom much is given, much will be required; and even more will be expected of the ones who have been entrusted with more." Hearing these words again reminded me of the many exceptional blessings God has bestowed upon my family and me. God has made Laura and me rich in love for each other, support for each other and commitment to improving the lives of our neighbors. We have two amazing, healthy children. Jack Elliott understands and expresses things in ways that astound even adults. He knows I go to the Capitol to help people, and that makes him happy. We are very close to each other and always know how much we love each other. God has given us a unique appreciation of the value of these gifts, which allow and require us to make our time together meaningful. I believe this is God's way of giving us the tools to fulfill the challenges He has laid before us.

I do not enumerate these blessings to be boastful, but in recognition of the fact that God has blessed my family abundantly and, according to His Word, much will be required of us.

Taking the passage in Luke further, the people of the 29th Senatorial District have entrusted me with a privilege and responsibility that few ever know. This means even more will be expected of me.

As I ponder this Scripture and its application to my life, I feel less melancholy about going back to the Capitol each week for the next five months. I am grateful for the exceptional blessings in my life. I know God has given my family the tools to meet our duties, and I am excited about the opportunity for my family to do everything we can to improve life for all of the families in southwest Missouri.

In upcoming Capitol Reports, I will discuss ideas and legislation being addressed in your Missouri Senate. I hope everyone in the 29th District had a Merry Christmas and will have many blessings in the New Year.

As always, I welcome your ideas, questions and concerns about Missouri government. You may contact me at the Capitol as follows: (573) 751-2234, jack.goodman@senate.mo.org or by writing to Senator Jack Goodman, Missouri State Capitol, Room 331, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

-END-