



**APRIL 5, 2007**

We are a little over halfway through the legislative session, and the momentum is really beginning to build. Yesterday, the Senate gave first round approval to SB577, which creates MoHealthNet, the program to replace Missouri's failed Medicaid program. Under the new MoHealthNet plan, a new emphasis will be placed on helping people get healthy and stay healthy. The current Medicaid system provides treatment for serious illnesses, but offers little to help prevent serious illnesses. Additionally, the new plan will enable each person to have a healthcare advocate, who will be chosen by the person as his or her consistent, primary contact person for healthcare. Under the current Medicaid system, many people are using emergency rooms as their primary healthcare contact, or jumping from provider to provider. This lack of stability makes it difficult to provide comprehensive diagnosis and treatment. The new system also provides for new technology to centralize patient health records so as patients see various doctors, specialists and pharmacists, the patient's medical history will be available to provide more accurate diagnosis and treatment. Of course, patient consent will be required and meaningful, stringent privacy protections are included.

Earlier this week, I passed SRB 611, which will remove about 200 pages of obsolete, ineffective laws from our statute books. The increase in Missouri's body of law over the past fifty years has been rapid and, in my opinion, rather frightening. Government does not need to legislate or regulate everything we do. SRB 611 is a real step toward reducing this growth.

Last week, I passed SB 417 which created the Farm Mentoring and Education program. This program will provide classroom instruction to new farmers, offering business and technological information that will benefit farmers facing the additional challenges of the twenty-first century. The program includes a mentoring program, pairing new farmers with experienced, successful farmers, which has proven to be highly successful and a real asset to new farmers in a pilot program and in other states.

Thank you for letting me work for you in the Missouri Senate. As always, I welcome your ideas, questions and concerns about Missouri government. You can contact me at the capitol as follows: (573) 751-2234, [jack.goodman@senate.mo.org](mailto:jack.goodman@senate.mo.org) or by writing to Senator Jack Goodman, Missouri State Capitol, Room 331, Jefferson City, MO 65101.