



*Nothing is politically right
that is morally wrong.*

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

*Free and fair discussion
is the firmest friend of truth.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 29, 2007

Higher Education Legislation Focuses on Making College More Affordable
Measure Limits College Tuition Increases, Expands Scholarships

JEFFERSON CITY – College may soon become more affordable for Missouri students to attend thanks to legislation introduced Monday by Senate Education Committee Chairman Sen. Gary Nodler, R-Joplin. The higher education legislative package, Senate Bill 389, would limit increases in college tuition, expand scholarship opportunities and funding as well as build world-class facilities on Missouri college campuses.

“We need to help families who are trying to pay for the skyrocketing costs for their children to earn their college degree,” Nodler said. “This measure is a package of solid steps we can take to keep the cost of college within reach as well as make a one-time investment to help our universities and colleges build world-class facilities for our students to learn in.”

Nodler said the bill gives the Missouri Higher Education Coordinating Board more oversight of tuition increases. Beginning in school year 2008-2009, if a university increases their tuition at a rate greater than inflation, defined as the Midwest Consumer Price Index determined by the federal government, the Coordinating Board could fine the institution up to 5 percent of their state appropriation. The university can seek a waiver for exceptional circumstances, but if the Coordinating Board rejects the waiver the money would be deposited into General Revenue.

Nodler also said the current Gallagher and Guarantee scholarships will be combined to create the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program. Funding for needs-based scholarships will grow through this program, including \$25 million from General Revenue this year.

The plan also authorizes the Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative that will build and maintain more than 20 projects on Missouri’s colleges, universities and community college campuses.

-MORE-

“First we must protect Missouri families from skyrocketing college costs by limiting tuition and expanding scholarship opportunities,” Senate President Pro Tem Michael R. Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, said. “We also need to focus on protecting the value of their college education by making sure our students have an opportunity to learn in world-class facilities led by top-notch educators.”

The bill has an emergency clause and Gibbons said he expects the Senate to get to work early on this priority.

The bill will be heard by the Senate Education Committee this Wednesday, Jan. 31, at the committee’s regularly scheduled 2 p.m. time in Senate Committee Room 1 located on the first floor of the capitol.

###