



# State Senator Harry Kennedy

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## Sen. Kennedy Rejects Plan to Reserve Millions for Canadian Corporation

### *Budget Priorities Misplaced*

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. Harry Kennedy, D-St. Louis, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Economic Development, Tourism and Local Government Committee, spoke passionately against a \$120 million giveaway to aircraft manufacturer Bombardier Aerospace.

Missouri Senate Democrats yesterday voted unanimously against an amendment sponsored by Sen. Gary Nodler, R-Joplin, which would have diverted \$120 million in General Revenue dollars to facilitate a business proposal with a Canadian aircraft assembly company. Numerous Senate Democrats told their colleagues during floor debate that Sen. Nodler, the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, had told them there was no money available in the budget for worthy projects like senior housing or health care for women and children.

However, Sen. Nodler “found” \$120 million in the state budget to advance plans for an aircraft assembly plant near Kansas City International Airport, even though the legislation authorizing the business deal with Bombardier Aerospace has not been approved by the Senate.

“I don’t think it’s right to put \$120 million into a lockbox for one corporation while we’re heading into an economic downturn and people are losing their health insurance,” Sen. Kennedy said. “We should be spending our limited state resources on programs and policies that benefit all Missourians.”

The Senate has debated the Bombardier “mega-project” for three days this session, with members of both parties objecting to both the size of the package and the lack of details surrounding the proposal. Senate Bill 1234 would provide \$880 million in tax credits to Bombardier over a 22-year period or \$40 million in tax credits each year. Meantime, Bombardier and the state are keeping many of the details of the deal confidential, including what other incentives the state may provide to entice the company to set up shop in Missouri.

An amendment which would have at least given the Legislature the power to approve the final deal was defeated after the bill’s sponsor said it would “kill the deal.” The measure is expected to be brought back to the floor for debate next week.

During Wednesday’s debate on House Bill 2007, which appropriates money for the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration and the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Sen. Nodler offered an amendment diverting \$120 million to the proposed Bombardier deal. Given the economic uncertainties facing Missouri and the nation, a majority of Senators rejected the amendment on a 22-11 vote. All Senate Democrats voted against the amendment.

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