



# THE STOUFFER REPORT

**Senator Bill Stouffer**  
**Capitol Building, Room 332**

**Senate District 21**  
**Jefferson City, MO 65101**

**For the Week of:**  
**January 7, 2008**

**Contact: Aaron Baker**  
**(573) 751-1507**

---

## **Opening Day at the State Capitol**

*Second Regular Session of the 94<sup>th</sup> Missouri General Assembly Begins*

If hot dogs and Cracker Jack make you think of opening day at Busch or Kauffman Stadiums, then heart-felt, bipartisan legislative priorities from General Assembly leaders should symbolize the start of each legislative session. Lawmakers recently made their way from their districts across the state to Jefferson City to begin the five-month stretch of creating new laws for the state.

Introductory remarks from Senate President Pro Tem Michael Gibbons set several priorities for lawmakers as well as a desire to create legislation that will make life better for Missourians. These issues include addressing the rising cost of property taxes, combating the problems created by illegal immigration, and making health care more accessible to more people in our state.

**Rising property taxes** are a reminder to lawmakers that we need to put forward our best effort to make sure citizens are being treated fairly by taxing entities. Rising property taxes are a concern for residents throughout the state, including some who feel that they are literally being taxed out of their homes. Seniors who live on fixed incomes are often victims of rising property tax rates. Even though this is a local issue, legislative action can and will be taken on a state level so each and every Missourian will not feel that they are being treated unfairly by local entities.

**Stopping illegal immigration** has come to the forefront of many states' legislative agendas. Some measures already in place require all state law enforcement agencies to take necessary steps to verify the immigration status of anyone presented for incarceration as well as make sure that the state does not support building projects that employ illegal workers. More can and should be done to address illegal immigration in our state.

**Health care reform** will again be a priority as lawmakers work to meet the state's medical needs, honor taxpayers, and sustain providers. In 2007, the Legislature passed a measure that authorized an improved health care plan for Missouri. Mo HealthNet created an innovative health care system to deliver 21<sup>st</sup> Century health care to the people of our state. Lawmakers recognized the importance of revamping our health care plan and the General Assembly is constantly looking for ways Missourians can better access quality health care. The state's leaders are working hard to keep us from returning to the inadequate health care system that failed Missourians before 2004.

I look forward to this legislative session where we will debate, discuss, and compromise in order to create legislation that will make our state even better. For more information about these measures or any other issue, please visit [www.senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov). And if you have questions or comments about any other topic, please call my office toll free (866) 768-3987 or send me an e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

- END -