



Senator
Bill Stouffer

DISTRICT 21

Senator Bill Stouffer – Cultivating Rural Missouri.

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The Stouffer Report: More Manufacturing Jobs Come to the 21st District

A lot of folks are focusing on the 4th quarter to determine whether or not the country is in a recession. Fortunately, rural Missouri continues to buck the trend by adding not only jobs, but jobs in the manufacturing sector.

[ConAgra Foods](#) is expanding its Marshall location. Both [city](#) and Saline County leaders are applauding the move, since it brings with it economic benefits that go beyond the realm of the company itself. The expansion will add around 160 jobs and should be finished soon. The company was approved for \$1.7 million in state tax credits from the [Missouri Department of Economic Development](#) (DED) in late spring.

The economic impact analysis that was released back in the summer points to a good return for the local economy. The report says for every dollar that will be lost in property taxes, another \$2.43 will come in from sales and property taxes from new people living in the area. As part of the deal for expansion, ConAgra will not have to pay property taxes for 20 years. The capital investment will run just shy of \$27 million, but it will also generate around \$34.5 million for Saline County and roughly \$500,000 in local sales taxes. Once the expansion is finished, the company's annual economic impact will increase from \$66 million to approximately \$85 million. The study was done by [Younger Associates](#), a market research firm from Tennessee.

Part of the city's interest in giving this the green light is the goal of keeping the new jobs here. It is easy for an organization to come in, make promises, get help from the city, and then pull its operation out of town in the middle of the night. There were dozens of cities competing for this project. The fact that ConAgra chose to expand its existing facility in Marshall says a lot about the community. Their

people say they are committed to Marshall and they are proving it. Not only will there be an additional 160 jobs there, but another 126 transportation, business services, and retail jobs are being created as a result of the expansion. Marshall's city council took the final step in issuing revenue bonds for the project toward late October.

These are rapidly becoming very trying times we live in. The economy has been showing signs of weakening throughout the year and the worse may be yet to come. Even in Missouri, we are starting to see a slowdown — even after three years of a thriving economy. Fortunately, [state revenues](#) are only down slightly. It is stories like the expansion at ConAgra, the arrival of a major equipment auctioneer service coming to Odessa, and the additions being made at the Caterpillar plant in Boonville that make me proud to represent this area. I pray we will hear more of these stories in the years to come as we look ahead to a new year and new possibilities.

Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and a part of Clay.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

Contact Information

Capitol Office State Capitol Room 332 Jefferson City, MO 65101	Website: http://www.senate.mo.gov/stouffer	Phone Number: 573.751.1507
	Toll-Free Phone Number: 866.768.3987	Fax: 573.751.9764

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