



Senator Jason Crowell – Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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## Missouri's Economy

Our responsible budget decisions and pro-growth policies have kept Missouri from facing the shortfalls, deficits, and other problems plaguing many other states in our nation. The Center on Budget Policies and Priorities recently reported that Missouri was one of only 11 states that are not facing a budget shortfall. The policies we have put in place have kept our state strong in these discouraging economic times.

Over the past four years, we have implemented a total increase of \$1.2 billion to support education in Missouri and promoted employment without increasing your taxes. In 2005, we passed a new foundation formula that bases funding on the needs of Missouri school children, not the taxing capacity of the district. The formula provides \$800 million during the entirety of the phase-in. Since 2005, elementary and secondary education funding for Southeast Missouri has increased by 17 percent. College students have better access to higher education with the addition of \$71 million for need-based scholarships, providing for a total of nearly \$96 million in

scholarship funding for Missouri students. Businesses have been able to grow and expand thanks to increases and expansions for successful job-supporting programs such as the Quality Jobs Act and Enhanced Enterprise Zones.



The job creation policies we have implemented over the past four years have made a positive difference in our state. Our elimination of junk lawsuits has received national attention.

According to the U.S. Chamber, our comprehensive junk lawsuit reform has moved Missouri up ten places

in the ranking of state's legal climates. Our position has improved every year since we passed junk lawsuit reform. We also reformed workers' compensation in Missouri. Thanks to our reforms, the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations' Division of Workers' Compensation recently announced that it would be reducing taxes on workers' compensation premiums by 50 percent in 2009. The reduction will lower the tax burden on businesses throughout the state and directly benefit employers in Southeast Missouri. This reduction will reinforce our efforts to keep Missouri an employer-friendly state.

We have also successfully provided tax relief to Missourians. This includes legislation I sponsored in the Senate that phases out state income taxes on Social Security benefits, non-private retirement benefits, and Social Security disability. I also passed legislation exempting from state sales taxes

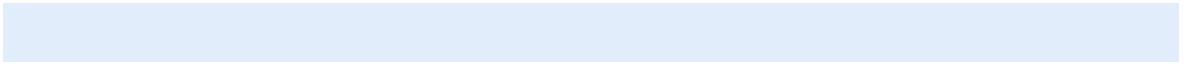
the cost of all energy sources, machinery, equipment and other materials used in the manufacturing, processing, compounding, or production of a product and research and development related to manufacturing. The legislation was able to help local businesses like Proctor and Gamble's paper products plant in Cape Girardeau. I also helped pass legislation giving Missouri families a break in the taxes paid for their health care coverage.

The result of our work was made clear several months ago when Ball State University released a study naming Missouri as the number one state in the country for manufacturing and logistics. Missouri's economic environment remains jobs-friendly. Missouri also led the nation in the total number of jobs created in September according to data released by the Federal Bureau of Labor statistics. Missourians created 3,800 jobs in September bringing the total number of jobs created since January 2005 to 78,000. This is Missouri's second straight month of job growth.

Missouri's economy is not perfect and we still have work to do; securing energy independence and providing access to quality health care for all Missourians, but our foundations are sound and together we will make tomorrow better than today.

### **Contact Me**

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: [jcrowell@senate.mo.gov](mailto:jcrowell@senate.mo.gov) or visit me on the web at <http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.



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