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**A Weekly Column for the
Week of April 21, 2008**

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Work Continues On the \$22.6 Billion State Operating Budget

Approving funding to run critical functions of state government with an emphasis on improving education, the Missouri Senate recently advanced thirteen budget bills totaling \$22.6 billion for the 2009 fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2008.

In my 2008 mid-session report, I outlined the governor's recommended operating budget for Fiscal Year 2009. This year, the Legislature has already considered a budget that includes an increased investment to improve math and science education, expanded access to scholarships for students in our state, help for working Missourians to purchase quality health insurance, and a tax cut for our veterans. The governor's recommendations were only preliminary numbers, and as the General Assembly continues to work on the budget, these numbers will fluctuate to reflect the changes by both Senate and House members.

Here is the breakdown of the Senate's plan for Missouri's major operating budget for fiscal year 2009:

- [House Bill 2001](#) — Public Debt \$98,232,171
- [House Bill 2002](#) — Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education \$5,327,868,388
- [House Bill 2003](#) — Higher Education \$1,247,827,871
- [House Bill 2004](#) — Dept. of Revenue/Dept. of Transportation \$2,900,041,337
- [House Bill 2005](#) — Office of Administration/Employee Benefits \$1,146,977,748
- [House Bill 2006](#) — Dept. of Agriculture/Dept. of Conservation/
Dept. of Natural Resources \$549,742,924
- [House Bill 2007](#) — Dept. of Economic Development/Dept. of Insurance, \$465,680,731
Financial Institutions & Professional Registration/
Dept. of Labor & Industrial Relations

- [House Bill 2008](#) — Dept. of Public Safety \$501,188,693
- [House Bill 2009](#) — Dept. of Corrections \$668,073,413
- [House Bill 2010](#) — Dept. of Mental Health/
Dept. of Health and Senior Services \$1,985,992,691
- [House Bill 2011](#) — Dept. of Social Services \$7,216,204,178
- [House Bill 2012](#) — Statewide Elected Officials/General Assembly/
Judiciary/Office of the Public Defender \$377,202,889
- [House Bill 2013](#) — Real Estate \$146,530,016

Differences in the budget between the Senate and House will be debated by conference committees. The negotiated versions of the budget must be approved by the House before returning to the Senate and then advancing to the governor. According to our state’s constitution, the final budget must be passed by 6 p.m. on Friday, May 9, 2008.

If you have questions or comments about the budget process, the way our budget dollars are being allocated, or another other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.state.mo.us.

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.

