



Delbert Scott
28th Senate District

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**A Weekly Column for the
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The 2009 Fiscal Year Begins

The 2009 fiscal year began on July 1, distributing more than \$22.4 billion to nearly every state department and agency within Missouri. The General Assembly debated and discussed details during the 2008 legislative session about our state budget, ensuring that each and every dollar was accounted for before passing each budget bill. Lawmakers in the Senate and House sent the governor the approved budget back in May. This is the largest budget in the history of our state. This year's final budget included funding for education, transportation and health care, among other areas.

Education

Highlights of this year's budget include a \$121.3 million increase to fully fund the state's Foundation Formula. Missouri's Foundation Formula determines a minimum per-pupil dollar figure that our state's students need to have in order to receive an adequate education, and adjusts funding according to each school district's different costs of living. This year's budget also includes increased funding for the A+ Schools Program by \$3.5 million, a higher education budget bill that allocates an additional \$43 million to help fund Missouri's public two- and four-year colleges and universities, and a \$48.7 million increase for the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Scholarship Program.

Transportation

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) received a \$483.3 million increase in funding for construction programs to maintain our state's roads and infrastructure, \$600,000 for increased costs associated with Amtrak, and \$550,000 in increased funding for the Missouri Elderly/Handicapped Assistance Program.

Health Care

Funding for health care services, such as an additional \$7.4 million for autism services and \$13 million to provide better access to health care for low-income women, was also included in the overall \$22.4 billion budget. The budget also includes a \$1.5 million for sheltered workshop programs, and a \$500,000 increase

for the Area Agency on Aging, which provides home-delivered meals. Other highlights of this year's budget include a 3 percent cost-of-living adjustment for state employees.

District 28 Highlights

Programs within our Senate district also received much-needed budget dollars:

- Foundation Formula — \$140,933,420
- State Parks and Historical Sites — \$1,553,487
- State Fair Community College — \$5,837,071
- State Schools for the Severely Disabled — \$889,228
- Southwest Missouri Psychiatric Hospital — \$3,121,116
- Expansion of Mentally Retarded/Developmentally Disabled (MRDD) Services in Benton County — \$150,000

Our state's fiscal year runs July 1 to June 30. The year, the constitutionally mandated budget deadline was May 9. The Missouri Senate worked diligently to pass the core budget bills, not only on time, but several days early and balanced. Sound management of state resources is essential for Missouri's progress.

If you have questions or comments about how legislators allocate funds or want to know more about budgetary items in our Senate district, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at:

delbertscott@senate.mo.gov.

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

