



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



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Week of March 17, 2008

At Mid-Session, Legislation Moving Forward

This week's mid-session recess marks the end of the first half of the 2008 legislative session. We still have plenty of work to do, but progress has already been made on several pieces of important legislation.

Leadership throughout the state has worked hard this year to address the problem of rising property taxes. The Senate solution is [Senate Bill 711](#), which I co-sponsored. The bill has been approved by the full body and is now in the House. Throughout the state, many citizens are seeing property reassessments and, in turn, property tax liabilities, increase. Taxing entities (libraries, schools, cities, counties, etc.) are constitutionally required to lower (roll back) their levy rate if an area's assessed value increases more than the rate of inflation. However, if the entity did not levy the maximum tax rate in the year before reassessment, the taxing jurisdiction may not have to roll back their tax rate in the reassessment year. Senate Bill 711 would require taxing jurisdictions that are levying below their tax rate ceiling to lower rates after reassessment to cancel out inflationary gains that otherwise would have been reaped. The legislation also makes sure that taxpayers are informed earlier of their tax obligation and increases property tax assistance for seniors and the disabled.

For many years, Missouri has worked to battle the problem of methamphetamine abuse in our state. This highly addictive and destructive drug has been damaging lives in our communities for too long. A bill passed in 2005 requires pharmacies to maintain a paper log and document any transactions where a customer purchases products that contain pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient in the production of methamphetamine. [Senate Bill 732](#), which has received approval from the Senate, would require pharmacies to switch to an electronic log and increase the amount of information required from the buyer. By strengthening these monitoring

requirements, we can better prevent individuals from purchasing more pseudoephedrine products than allowed by law.

Another prime issue we have been addressing this session is cyber stalking. [Senate Bill 818](#) would expand the definitions of stalking and harassment to include communications delivered by any means, even through the use of computers and other electronic devices. Stronger penalties would also be put in place for stalking and harassment — particularly for repeat offenders. The bill was filed in response to the suicide of a Missouri teenager who allegedly became upset over online communications with adults posing as a teenage boy. The legislation would make it a crime for adults to harass a child who is (or claims to be) younger than 17.

The progress on these bills as well as several other measures is encouraging and shows a genuine effort from lawmakers to continue with our ongoing progress. I am hopeful that the Senate will continue to move smoothly—functioning through fair and reasonable debate and discussion. I will continue to let you know about our accomplishments in the Senate as the session progresses.

*Senator Gary Nodler represents the people of Newton, Jasper
and Dade counties in the Missouri Senate.*