

For Immediate Release
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SHARING A VIEW OF THE STATE

Issues and Comments – 33rd Senatorial District

Senator

Chuck Purgason

The General Assembly resumed from Spring Break on Tuesday. Coincidentally, Tuesday was also the day filing for the 2008 election closed. Although there were several more candidates who filed, no real surprises emerged. Now campaigning for state legislative and Congressional seats will begin in earnest. If you are weary of the Presidential campaign, prepare yourself for even more political rhetoric between now and November.

The budget continues to make its way through the process. This week the senate passed its version of the Supplemental Budget. These are adjustments to the regular budget passed last year. For various reasons some money appropriated last year is unneeded, while other areas have exceeded their available funds. The Supplemental Budget is intended to address these areas. As the version passed by the Senate differs slightly from what the House voted out, a Conference Committee consisting of five senators and five representatives will negotiate a compromise.

In the regular budget, the House replaced the three percent raise for state employees with a flat, across the board increase for everyone. The increase amounts to a little over one thousand dollars per year. I fully expect this to be revisited by the Senate. If the percentage raise is reinstated, the issue will be resolved by a Conference Committee between the two chambers.

Other matters discussed this week were the education tax credit bill and the transportation bill.

As a comment on the Growth of Government Department, the Senate passed 20-11 the biodiesel mandate. I and ten of my colleagues worked hard to defeat the bill citing the rising costs of food production, fertilizer, and the fact that these mandates are hurting farmers across our district as well as across the state. Unfortunately, the special interests outside the doors of the Capitol won out over the silent majority of hard-working Missouri taxpayers.

As usual, I can be reached at State Senate, State Capitol, Room 420, Jefferson City, MO, 65101 or 573-751-1882, or chuck.purgason@senate.mo.gov for your questions, comments, or advice.