



Federal Stimulus Funds Prompt Special Legislation to Ensure Accountability to Missouri Taxpayers

JEFFERSON CITY — The General Assembly is committed to ensuring accountability and fiscal oversight of the federal stimulus money coming to Missouri, including the recent passage of bipartisan legislation that tracks when and where the one-time federal funds provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 are spent.

Before its mid-session recess, the Senate and House passed [Senate Bill 313](#), which creates two special funds within the state treasury to deposit the federal stimulus funds. The legislation creates the “Federal Budget Stabilization Fund” to deposit money the state receives that is awarded to supplement the payments to on-going programs and the “Federal Stimulus Fund” for all other funds received. Establishing the funds was necessary for the state to receive the federal stimulus money and in order to create an accountability procedure for tracking the estimated \$4 billion Missouri expects to receive in federal funds.

At this writing, Senate Bill 313 is on the governor’s desk awaiting approval — the first bill to pass the General Assembly during this legislative session. An emergency clause in the bill will make it effective upon his signature.

Accountability and transparency of the federal stimulus funds is vital for ensuring your tax dollars are spent efficiently and with complete accountability and transparency. That’s why I also recently introduced [Senate Bill 568](#), which would create a Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board within the state’s Office of Administration to prevent fraud, waste and abuse of the federal funds received by our state or any of its political subdivisions. The proposed legislation includes legal recourse and penalties to address fraudulent claims or misuse of the federal funds.

As another way Missouri is promoting accountability and transparency of the federal stimulus funds is by providing information on the state’s receipts and disbursements of those funds on the state auditor’s Web site at www.auditor.mo.gov. Through the Web site, Missourians can sign up to receive email updates on the state’s federal stimulus funds.

As many of you know, I am not a fan of the president’s federal stimulus plan to spend our way out of debt nor am I pleased with the many strings attached for receiving many of the available federal funds. However, I am committed to ensuring Missouri spends these one-time dollars efficiently and with total accountability to our taxpayers.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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