



Senator Kevin Engler

Capitol Report

Majority Floor Leader

3rd District

*Senator Kevin Engler proudly represents the people of
Carter, Iron, Reynolds, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve,
Washington counties and part of Jefferson County*

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Week of March 2, 2009

Staying Smart with Federal Stimulus Funding

In mid-February, the president signed the Federal Recovery and Reinvestment Act in an attempt to bolster the struggling economy, and Missouri is still working to see how this plan can best benefit us. We have to ensure that this one-time funding is not used for on-going projects or else we will come up short when the federal money stops. Instead, we have been exploring options as to how to meet our budget needs and utilize the federal dollars in a responsible way.

The bill created in Washington, D.C., is hundreds of pages long, so we are continuing to learn about the plan. We have found that Congress has left us with very little flexibility by attaching contingencies to just about every dollar that is coming to Missouri. While some states seem to struggle with fiscal responsibility (California, for example, is facing a \$42-billion deficit), we have established a pattern of careful, accountable spending. We have to be very smart with the federal stimulus funding so that we can continue this pattern and make sure we do not fund programs with dollars that are sure to fall off a cliff within the next few years.

There are many ideas on how the federal stimulus money should be handled, and you have the opportunity to express your views. A new site called “Transform Missouri” was recently launched to give you the chance to submit a proposal or share your ideas on how the funding could be used to help Missouri’s economy. This site is available at

www.transform.mo.gov.

On Wednesday in the Senate Committee on Gubernatorial Appointments, we heard from the governor's pick for the director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) position. For the last four years we have had a department ran with a rational and reasonable approach. I am hopeful that common sense will continue within DNR.

We are continuing to work on legislation, including the economic development legislation that would expand the Quality Jobs Act. There will be more action on the Senate floor in the coming weeks, and I will let you know what is going on with the bills we are debating and discussing.

Visiting this week were several constituents representing the Emergency Medical Services and Ambulance Districts from our area. I was happy to meet with them.

If you are planning a trip to Jefferson City in the near future, do not hesitate to contact my office. You can call me at 573-751-3455, e-mail me at kevin.engler@senate.mo.gov or write to me at the Missouri Senate, State Capitol, Room 331, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

If you know anyone who would like to receive these updates electronically, please [send me](#) an email.

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