



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 9, 2009

Progress at Mid-Session

Next week is the Legislature's mid-session recess, and we completed work on several pieces of legislation this week. This included the first bill agreed to by both the House and Senate, which would help track any federal stimulus dollars accepted by our state. We also worked on the year's supplemental spending bill and continued work on a bill meant to spur Missouri's economy.

There has been talk in the media and in the halls of the Capitol about the Senate's action on legislation meant to create jobs and support economic growth in Missouri. Over the past several weeks, we have been working carefully on this to make sure that we craft the legislation in a way that will create quality jobs and protect taxpayers by ending corporate giveaways. We want to make sure we know how the bill will impact Missouri workers and their take-home pay. The governor has been trying to pressure the Senate into acting now, but we are not going to rush to pass a large bill without fully analyzing it. Our state is not going to make the same mistakes Washington when rushing through their bailout. We are going to take the time during the mid-session recess to talk to local workers and business owners to make sure we are truly addressing the needs of Missourians.

[Senate Bill 313](#) is the first bill to reach the governor's desk this session and addresses the ongoing issue of federal funding coming to Missouri from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The bill creates two funds in the state treasury: the "Federal

Budget Stabilization Fund” will receive funds that are awarded to supplement on-going programs, while all other funds received under the act will be deposited into the “Federal Stimulus Fund.” This legislation ensures that every dollar that comes into Missouri from the federal plan is tracked, allowing us to ensure that we are not using temporary funding for ongoing projects as we work to pass a fiscally responsible state budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Since the bill was passed with an emergency clause, it will go into effect immediately upon the governor’s signature.

The Senate gave approval to its version [House Bill 14](#), a supplemental spending bill for fiscal year 2009. When the budget is created, the appropriations staff work hard to create the closest possible estimates to appropriate funds to state programs. However, there are situations when the funding needs change as the year progresses or as new programs are implemented. Each year, we pass a supplemental spending bill to address budget issues that were not passed or were not funded to a level sufficient for the whole year. The bill provides continued funding for several important programs that citizens in Missouri depend on. Thanks to the fiscal responsibility the Legislature has exercised for the past several years, Missouri is not facing the mid-year deficit that many other states in this country are struggling to deal with, and we are able to continue providing funding to meet our state’s needs.

With the first half of the session coming to an end, I am pleased with much of the work we have accomplished so far. During the second half of session, many more bills will be debated and passed. Work on the budget will also continue, and the Senate will contribute its part to the appropriations process as we work to craft a responsible spending plan.

Also this week, I was pleased to meet with and sponsor Rich Blakley of Viburnum as a member of the Missouri Quality Home Care Council. The panel works to ensure the availability and improve the quality of home care services in Missouri.

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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