



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 April 13, 2009

Work on Budget Progresses

Much of the Senate's work this week was focused on the budget. The General Assembly is constitutionally required to pass the budget this year by May 8. Despite complications caused by the federal "stimulus" legislation that was passed by Congress in February, I was pleased that we were able to efficiently pass all 13 budget bills so that they can now continue through the process.

The 13 bills as passed by the Senate total \$23.2 billion for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins on July 1, 2009. I was pleased that we were able to restore several funding items originally cut by the House. For our area, this included an additional \$1 million for the Farmington Correctional Facility, an additional \$1 million for the Bonne Terre Correctional Facility, and an additional \$700,000 for the Potosi Correctional Facility. Another important line item in the budget maintains full funding for the Sexual Predator Unit in Farmington. Some of these restorations were possible because the Senate incorporated federal stabilization dollars that were not utilized in the House version. Although I do not agree with the actions of Washington "bailout" D.C., I am pleased that we can take these fiscally irresponsible policies and use them wisely for the future of our state. The conference committees will now work out the differences between the two chambers, and then send the negotiated version back to the House and then the Senate for final approval.

Crowds of citizens in locations all over the state gathered this week to express their concern and upset with the federal government's spending practices. These "tea parties" were

designed to remind us of the Boston Tea Party in 1773, the event in which Americans protested British policies of taxation without representation. I was able to attend some of the events that took place this week and express that I too find the federal government's policies and spending practices ridiculous. I was also happy to hear that the rallies held back in the district were successful.

We also worked on [Senate Bill 376](#) this week, which would promote investment in energy efficiency by allowing electric companies to recover costs from energy conservation programs by permitting them to change their rates accordingly. However, this can only take place if the program has been approved by the Public Service Commission, the program results in energy savings, and the program is beneficial to all customers in the area being affected.

Last year, we passed another measure focused on energy efficiency, which included the "Show-Me Green Sales Tax Holiday." From April 19th to April 25th, the sales of qualifying Energy Star certified new appliances will be exempt from state sales tax. For more information on what is exempt and a list of local jurisdictions that are participating, visit <http://dor.mo.gov/tax/business/sales/taxholiday/green/>.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to some local school districts that were recently recognized for their good work. Each year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recognizes high-achieving schools through the Gold Star Schools Program. Roosevelt Elementary and Washington-Franklin Elementary, both in the Farmington R-7 School District were recognized as 2009 Gold Star Schools. Washington-Franklin was also nationally recognized as a "Distinguished Title I School".

If you are planning a trip to Jefferson City in the near future, do not hesitate to contact my office. You may reach me at 573-751-3455, send your e-mails to 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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