



For Immediate Release

## **Senior Investor Protection Act now law**

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – State Senator Timothy P. Green (D-Spanish Lake) sponsored a measure that increases penalties for financial fraud in the Senior Investor Protection Act. The legislature approved the bill and Governor Nixon has signed it into law increasing the ability of Secretary of State Robin Carnahan's Office to protect Missouri seniors that invest in the financial markets.

"This is one of the toughest investor protection laws in the nation, allowing the state to order restitution which something no other securities regulator in the country has the ability to do," said Sen. Green.

Secretary of State Robin Carnahan says in 2008, her office fielded more than 2,000 calls on its investor protection hotline, a 20 percent increase over any previous year. Carnahan says the protection act establishes a \$50,000 penalty against those who commit financial fraud against seniors or the disabled.

"Robin Carnahan has recovered nearly \$10 billion dollars for thousands for investors and the new measure also allows for mandatory restitution payments and additional civil penalties which will further strengthen the protections," said Sen. Green.

"Since taking office, Secretary of State Robin Carnahan has targeted financial scam artists who prey on seniors and worked to get restitution for victims of financial fraud," Sen. Green says. "This new law is a victory for senior investors, that have worked hard all throughout their lives, who are vulnerable to financial scams because it will increase significantly the protections they have under state law."

Carnahan's office reports the following statistics for fraud complaints:

- Carnahan received 807 calls to the investor protection hotline from Jan-May of this year. Carnahan received 533 calls over that same time period in 2008.
- In 2008, Carnahan fielded a record 2,076 calls on the investor protection hotline, a 20% increase over the previous record for a full year.
- In 2008, Carnahan received 460 formal complaints (for comparison, Carnahan received 301 in 2007).
- Carnahan has received 242 formal complaints to date for 2009, which puts on pace for well over 400 complaints again this year.
- In 2008, 62 percent of the complaints were converted into investigations.
- In 2009, Carnahan converted 69 percent of complaints into investigations.

To report fraud or for more, visit the Secretary of State's Web page found at <http://www.sos.mo.gov> on the new protections.

###