



# PRESS RELEASE

## State Senator Wes Shoemyer – 18<sup>th</sup> District

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### **SHOEMYER FILES RESOLUTION TO PRESERVE CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

#### *Stimulus Dollars Would Fund Lewis & Clark Discovery Initiative*

JEFFERSON CITY – Senator Wes Shoemyer, D-Clarence, this week filed a Senate Concurrent Resolution designed to continue construction on college campuses across Missouri. Governor Nixon says projects that have not broken ground are being suspended due to a lack of funds from the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority (MOHELA). MOHELA has failed to make several quarterly payments to the state as required by legislation signed by former Governor Blunt in 2007.

“I did not support Governor Blunt’s MOHELA scheme because I was worried that lawmakers were making promises we could not keep,” Sen. Shoemyer said. “Just like the 15-year highway plan, the legislature made a bunch of promises to spend all kinds of money in communities across Missouri, and just like the 15-year highway plan, those promises are being broken. It’s no wonder people don’t trust their government. So I’ve come up with a plan to make sure those promises are fulfilled.”

SCR 15, filed this week by Sen. Shoemyer, urges the governor and the Office of Administration to use any federal stimulus dollars Missouri receives that are designated for capital improvements to fully fund the Lewis & Clark Discovery Initiative.

MOHELA has delayed several quarterly payments it is required to make to the state, building up a \$12.5-million IOU. In 2008, MOHELA recorded its first loss in the agency’s 27-year history, forcing it to cut staff positions and reduce its lending to out-of-state college students who want to attend college in Missouri. Of the \$350-million promised by the Blunt administration for campus construction projects, the state has received just \$240-million from MOHELA, leaving a \$108-million shortfall.

Governor Nixon recently announced that construction projects that are underway will continue to be funded through the money MOHELA transferred to the state shortly after the legislation passed in 2007, but projects that have not broken ground are being eliminated or postponed, including the renovations to the Pershing Building at Truman State University in Kirksville, construction of a UM Plant Science Building in Mexico and the development of the UM Greenley Learning and Discovery Park in Novelty, in Knox County.

“These projects will create jobs at a time when too many families in northeast Missouri are getting pink slips,” Sen. Shoemyer said. “The stimulus plan moving through Congress is supposed to jumpstart our economy by creating jobs. My resolution does that by fully funding the college construction projects instead of using this one-time money to plug holes in the state budget.”

SCR 15 has been referred to the Senate Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics Committee for a public hearing.

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