



## MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the  
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# The Federal Stimulus

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JEFFERSON CITY – This week President Barak Obama signed a major economic stimulus bill just a month after taking the oath of office. The speed with which Congress approved the \$787-billion American Recovery & Reinvestment Act is a testament to the fragile state of our national economy. Each day we hear about big corporations laying off hundreds or even thousands of employees, and every day brings another round of housing foreclosures. Some folks in Congress, especially in the U.S. House, seemed to be more interested in playing politics and scoring political points than helping out folks who are hurting, but fortunately cooler heads prevailed and the bill was approved.

In the Missouri legislature, we are still reviewing the federal stimulus package to see how the money will be spent, but it's going to be a huge shot in the arm for education, for health care, and for infrastructure projects like roads and bridges. In fact, just moments after President Obama signed the stimulus bill, Governor Nixon immediately began putting that money to work building a new bridge over the Osage River at Tuscumbia.

Missouri is expected to receive \$4.3-billion from the federal stimulus package, although most of that money has been designated for specific programs like Medicaid, transportation infrastructure or improving education. This week the Senate approved a bill that creates two separate funds in the state treasury to receive and retain these federal dollars while lawmakers determine how best to spend the money to get our state economy moving again. We need to make sure we use this money to create jobs to help the 219,000 Missourians who are out of work, and I know job creation is one of Governor Nixon's priorities.

I think it's important for folks to understand that the federal stimulus package is not some magic bullet that will immediately turn our economy around. In fact, some economists think things are going to get worse before they get better. The government is trying to come up with a way to help homeowners facing foreclosure as well as developing a plan to reform our banking system. But the stimulus is an important first step in our nation's economic recovery; it's expected to create or save some 69,000 jobs in Missouri alone.

The Obama administration says the stimulus is a multi-pronged approach that creates a framework for clean, efficient, American energy; transforms our economy with science and technology; modernizes roads, bridges, transit and waterways; overhauls education for the 21st Century; includes tax cuts to make work pay and create jobs; expands access to healthcare and lowers costs; provides assistance to workers hurt by the economy; and saves public sector jobs and protects vital services.

I know this plan can make a difference, just like the stimulus package approved by the federal government in the 1930's helped my family. My grandpa was able to get a WPA job busting rocks and the Farmer Home Administration was created and allowed him to borrow money to start our farm. He was paying taxes once again and never again depended on government assistance.

This week we welcomed a lot of visitors to our Capitol office, including members of FFA and 4-H. I hope you'll stop by our office if you are in Jefferson City to visit the Capitol.

If you have any questions or comments about this or any other issue, give my Capitol office a call at (573) 751-7852, send me an email at [wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov), or drop a line to Room 434, State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101.