



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
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Economic Development

JEFFERSON CITY – As some of you may know, I serve on the Missouri Workforce Investment Board, which provides leadership to create the most educated, highly-trained workforce we can have in order to attract and retain businesses. Our goals are to attract and keep talent in the state; develop a method to identify workforce demands and the required skills on an ongoing basis; and promote continuous preparation of prospective and current workers to access training opportunities that address basic, life, employability and technical skills through lifelong learning.

This week Governor Nixon hosted the 51st Governor's Conference on Economic Development in St. Louis, and hundreds of individuals and business representatives attended this important gathering. As a member of the Missouri Workforce Investment Board, I thought it was critical to attend. In fact, the timing of this year's conference could not have been better given the economic difficulties facing our state and our nation right now.

The state Department of Economic Development, which puts together the annual conference, brought together the state's economic leaders to look at the latest trends, programs and education related to economic development in Missouri. The theme of this year's conference is "Missouri at Work, Investing in Tomorrow."

This year's conference focused on four key areas: ensuring that all areas of the state have opportunities for economic growth; providing resources for entrepreneurs and small business owners across the state; highlighting updates in economic development such as changes to tax credit programs and updates on federal stimulus projects; and looking ahead to the future of economic development, with a focus on green jobs and training for 21st century jobs.

Missouri is poised to be a leader in the economic recovery that is beginning to take hold across the country. Our central location, our highly-educated, hard-working citizens, our integrated transportation system and low taxes all make our state a desirable place to do business. I applaud the efforts of all of those who attended the Governor's Conference on Economic Development for doing everything possible to ensure Missouri continues to be a leader in creating and retaining good jobs for its citizens.

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, or drop a line to Room 434, State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101.