



Senator Jason Crowell – Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

[Website](#) | [Contact Me](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

Reforms this Session to Create a Better Future for Missouri

Over the past several weeks, I have discussed several ways that we can create a sound fiscal future for our state in spite of the tough economy. Missouri should not implement the fiscally risky policies so many other states, such as California, have; there is a better way to make sure that our future is financially secure. I am advocating a series of policy reforms this session designed to place Missouri on a strong, fiscally sound path. These policy reforms include:

Rejecting the Bailout Mindset



While Washington “Bailout” D.C. is supporting plans that utilize money that is not there to help those that made bad choices, we are using fiscal common sense to make sure your state tax-payer dollars are managed wisely. Our federal

government disregards the important lesson of the Ant and the Grasshopper, which teaches us that hard work and thrift, is the way to make it through a rough winter. Instead, the federal government is choosing to reward those who make irresponsible fiscal decisions, putting everyone's economic future at risk. We should not support misguided bailouts.

Ending Unaccountable Spending

Earlier this year, the Missouri Development Finance Board heard and approved, all in one day, \$25 million in tax credits for parking lots at the Kansas City Chiefs' stadium and a new indoor training camp in St. Joseph. This is on top of the \$50 million in tax credits this same board gave the Chiefs and Royals in 2006 for stadium enhancements. The process which allows an earmark of this type to occur without legislative approval and review is despicable and must be stopped. The Legislature can not craft a responsible budget that meets our needs if we continue to allow unelected, appointed boards to spend your tax dollars like there is no tomorrow. These sweetheart deals and backroom agreements must come to an end.

Making Common Sense Decisions



In 2003, the General Assembly used bond financing to help close shortfalls in its general revenue. This \$387 million bond issue is now a debt that the state must pay, with interest. Although we cannot pay off these bonds immediately without fees,

there are specific times when we are able to pay off the debt before it reaches maturity. For the 2003 bonds, as just one example, this is in 2014. I have

proposed that Missouri use some of the federal “stimulus” dollars to pay off our debt, freeing up future state funds. Missouri must not try to tax and spend its way out of economic distress, and we should not pass our debts on to future generations. Federal “stimulus” funds are one-time, and now is not the time to be creating new, long-term spending programs with temporary dollars. My plan would allow Missouri to use any possible one-time federal “stimulus” dollars to pay off our bonds in 2014, reducing our debt and saving our state a total of \$123.6 million in interest over the life of the bonds. We would also be freeing up \$28 million annually between 2014 and 2029.

Focusing on Accountability and Oversight

The issuance of tax credits in our state is out of control because of a lack of oversight and accountability; this must change! Tax credits, a dollar-for-dollar reduction in tax liability that would otherwise be due to the state, have exploded in the last 10 years, increasing by approximately 107 percent. In order to responsibly manage the use of tax credits, we must change our policy on the issuance and authorization of tax credits to include appropriate accountability and fiscal oversight. I am calling for reforms that require all tax credit expenditures to be approved by the General Assembly through the appropriations process like every other state expenditure. Whether we spend a dollar on K-12 education or issue a dollar in tax credits, it all costs hard working Missouri taxpayers the same. In tough economic times, we need to be able to weigh the importance of a dollar spent on a tax credit versus a dollar spent on a sheltered workshop or access to healthcare.

These common sense reforms (rejecting the bailout mindset, ending unaccountable spending, making common sense decisions, and focusing on accountability and oversight) are designed to place Missouri on a strong,

fiscally sound path. I hope you will join me in our efforts to fundamentally reform state budgeting by doing away with abusive ear marks and bringing meaningful accountability and oversight over the use of hard earned tax payer dollars.

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions, and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.

Contact Information

Capitol Office
State Capitol Building
Room 323
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Website:
<http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>

Phone Number:
573.751.2459
Fax:
573.522.9289