



MISSOURI SENATE  
JEFFERSON CITY

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## Balancing Our State's Checkbook

*Working On A Budget for More Than 5.6 Million Missourians*

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Whether it is each day, week, month, or sometimes longer, every one of us has to balance our checkbooks in order to keep a financial record of what we have spent and how much we have left to spend on what we want and need. The same goes for our state. Each year the General Assembly has to craft a budget that is fair and balanced, and that time is now.

Work on the state's FY 2010 budget began in December 2008. [House Bills 1-13](#) make up our state's budget. Each bill pertains to different state departments and constitutionally mandated issues ranging from public debt to funding for the Judicial Branch.

The [Senate Appropriations Committee](#) is charged with working with these thirteen budget bills. Hundreds of hours have been spent by members of the Senate Appropriations Committee since late last year calculating how each entity will receive state funds. Approximately five months after work began on the FY 2010 budget, now these budget bills are up for debate in the full Senate.

My colleagues and I worked through these various budget items, noting difficult cuts in state programs. Times are tough and the economic downfall is still being felt throughout our state. Our current economic climate affects how lawmakers draft these budget bills and debate how our state's dollars are spent. Even though Missouri has received federal assistance for state-sponsored health care programs, education funding, and infrastructure improvements through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, difficult decisions still have to be made regarding crucial programs throughout our state — after all, our state still has a budget shortfall and we cannot count on these federal funds to bail us out.

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Safeguards were set in place nearly a month ago to make sure that every dollar received through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is accounted for. [Senate Bill 313](#) creates two separate funds within our state treasury to receive and retain these specific federal funds. Any money our state receives that is intended to replace general revenue would be deposited into the “Federal Budget Stabilization Fund.” Additional funds received under the act would be deposited into the “Federal Stimulus Fund.” With [Senate Bill 313](#) already signed into law, funding for identified projects would be paid through the specially-created fund rather than being mixed with Missouri’s general revenue.

While we continue our work to pass a fiscally responsible budget for the citizens of this state, keep in mind that the rather large check register we are maintaining is similar to the one you keep. The General Assembly feels the financial burden just like you. During these times we need to be resourceful and fund the most important programs for Missourians.

The General Assembly is constitutionally mandated to complete the state’s budget this year by May 8, 2009. If you have comments or questions about the budget process, bills that make up the state’s budget, or any matter involving state government, please feel free to contact me at (573) 751-8793 or by e-mail at: [delbertscott@senate.mo.gov](mailto:delbertscott@senate.mo.gov).

*Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.*

