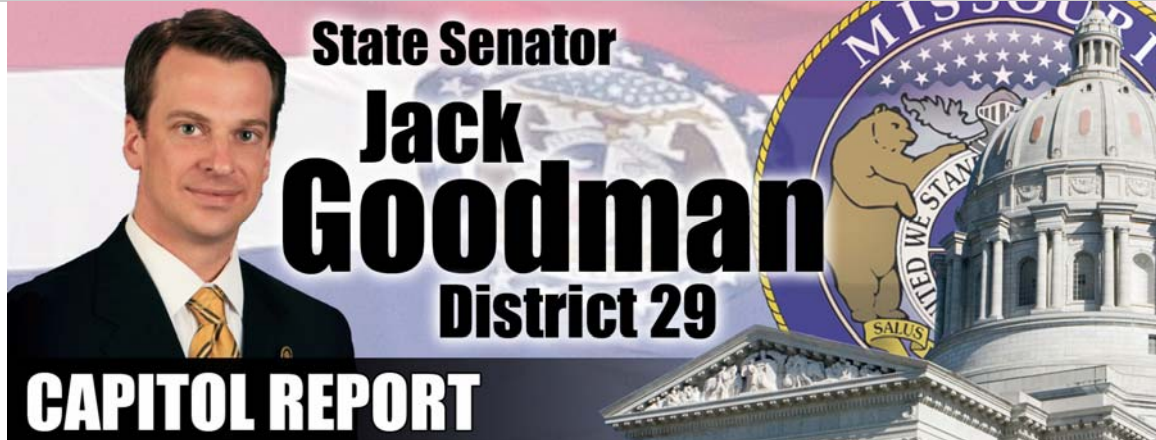


March 26, 2009



Senator Jack Goodman – Serving Barry, Lawrence, McDonald, Ozark, Stone and Taney Counties

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For the past several weeks, the Missouri Senate has been working on a comprehensive crime bill. [Senate Bill 261](#) was taken up on the floor once again this week, and I was able to add an amendment that will aid in the investigation and prosecution of cattle rustlers, which have become a serious problem in southwest Missouri. Recently, 53 head of cattle were stolen in nearby Christian County. In January, 41 cows were stolen in Lawrence County. These are just a few of the many cases of cattle rustling in recent months.

The problem is so serious that the [New York Times reported](#) this week on the surge of thefts in Missouri; specifically, southwestern Missouri. One challenge that law enforcement faces in investigating and prosecuting cattle theft is locating and identifying the stolen animals before they are taken a long distance away or destroyed. Also, because verifying ownership is not required when cattle are sold at an auction or stockyard, thieves can make their money very quickly and then slip away without ever being caught.

While we do save Missouri's ranchers from having to pay fees by not requiring them to register their cattle, we need to do something to help prevent stolen cattle from being sold, and along with them, any evidence of who committed the crime.

My amendment addresses cattle rustling at the selling point. It allows law enforcement to have access to records at stockyards that are already open to the state veterinarian and the Department of Agriculture in order to locate and identify stolen cattle. This is one step we can take to help combat cattle rustling.

Another component of the bill included by Senator Clemens enhances the penalties

for stealing livestock. Hopefully, this combination of legislative action will equip law enforcement to combat this growing problem.

As always, I welcome your ideas, questions and concerns about Missouri government. You may contact me at the Capitol as follows: (573) 751-2234, jack.goodman@senate.mo.gov or by writing to Senator Jack Goodman, Missouri State Capitol, Room 331-A, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

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