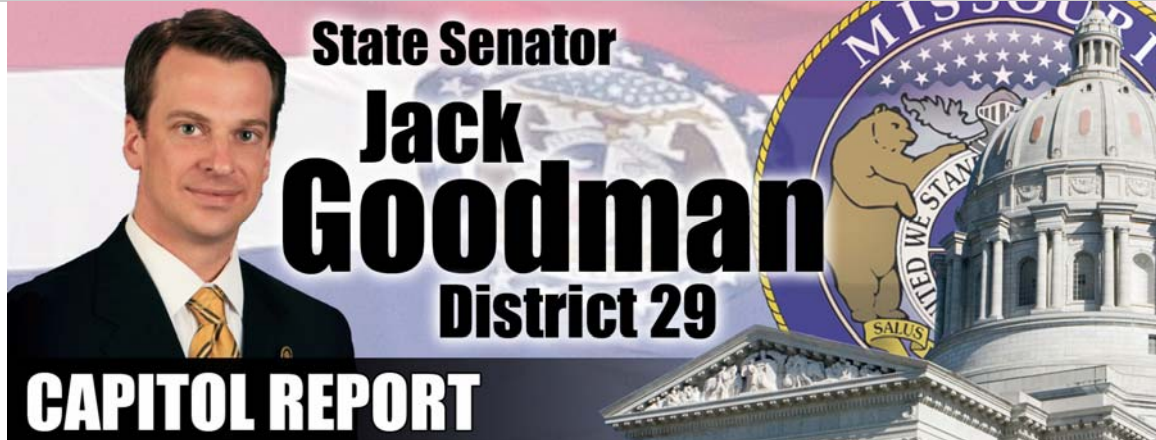


Week of March 30, 2009



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

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

[Providing Efficient, Effective Health Care](#)

This week, your Missouri Senate gave first-round approval to legislation providing health care to more Missourians by making more efficient use of an existing source of revenue. With the current national economic crisis, we are seeing more and more uninsured individuals forced to visit Missouri's emergency rooms for routine medical care. Under federal law, taxpayers are obligated to absorb the cost of these ER visits. [Senate Bill 306](#) will save taxpayers money by focusing on preventive, proactive health care and reducing expensive trips to the ER. Giving patients access to less expensive health care that will prevent minor conditions from developing into serious conditions is better for patients and a better investment of taxpayer dollars. The legislation received preliminary approval this week, and one more passing Senate vote will send it to the House for similar consideration.

Without raising taxes, the bill will expand health care coverage to approximately 35,000 working, low-income Missourians who are currently uninsured. It establishes the Show-Me Health Coverage Plan within the Department of Social Services to provide health care coverage through the private insurance market for these individuals. This program will provide benefits similar to those available under MO HealthNet (formerly Medicaid) and will focus on preventive care. If minor health issues are addressed before they become major health issues, we can avoid paying higher costs and draining taxpayer resources down the road.

When crafting this plan, we were extremely careful to protect taxpayers from an additional burden. The funding for the plan would not come from additional taxpayer dollars. Rather, it would be funded by money that the state already receives from hospitals through taxes and other federal funding.

As it stands, the plan would provide coverage for individuals making up to 50 percent

of the federal poverty level, or \$5,415 per year. For working parents, the plan would provide coverage for those with an earned household income up to 100 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$22,050 for a family of four.

The bill limits participation in the program to three years, with an option to extend it two more years if the individual is enrolled in a GED program or taking courses through a college or university. Coverage would not exceed five years. The bill will help people who are struggling through a difficult time to get back on their feet, while providing the incentive to improve their lives and start on the road to self-reliance.

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.

-END-

Contact Information

Capitol Office
State Capitol Building
Room 331-A
Jefferson City, MO 65101

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

Phone Number:
573.751.2234 (Capitol)
417.466.3731 (District)

Fax:
573.526.9808