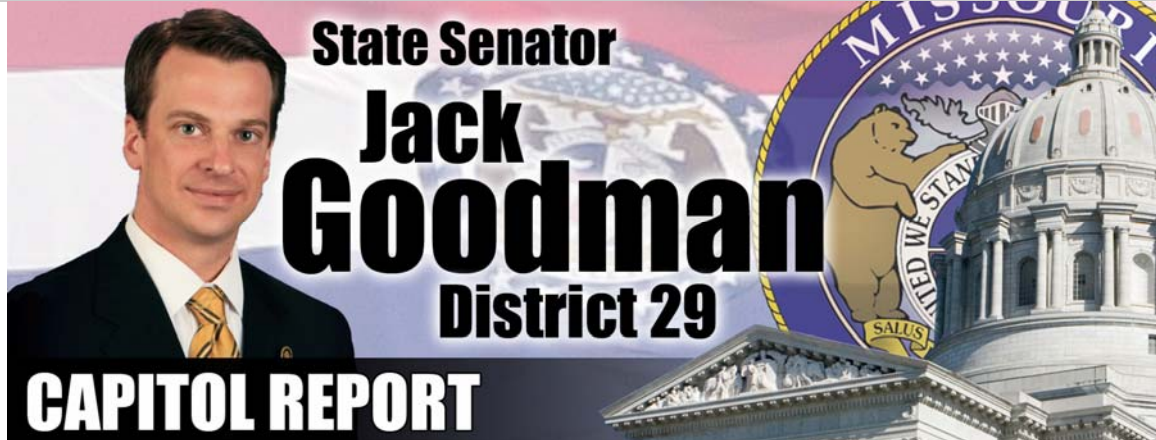


August 10, 2009



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

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## [We Need Real Solutions](#)

Nearly half a year ago, President Obama signed into law a purported "stimulus" plan with a price tag of nearly a trillion dollars for the American taxpayer. The President and Congress insisted the spending bill must be passed right away or further unspecified economic calamities would befall the nation. This spending plan, with unprecedented spending by the federal government, was supposed to provide immediate relief to a downtrodden economy.

Months later, most of the promises made as the 1,000-page bill was rammed through Congress remain unfulfilled. Not surprisingly, the spending plan is not working as advertised, largely because Washington was under the misguided belief that the federal government can spend itself out of a recession. Every family or business manager that has lived on a budget knows this will not work.

Washington's unfocused spending spree has failed to achieve its stated goals. For example, the President claimed that his stimulus plan would prevent unemployment from going beyond 8 percent. Now, with unemployment inching toward 10 percent, it is high time for us to think beyond speeches and start demanding results.

A specifically troubling component of the spending plan is the "Cash for Clunkers" program. The touted purpose of Cash for Clunkers was to encourage consumers to buy more fuel-efficient vehicles by offering a \$3,500 or \$4,500 "rebate" on a new car purchase when the customer trades in a less fuel-efficient vehicle. Only a week after the program started, news spread like wildfire that the \$1 billion set aside for Cash for Clunkers was almost gone.

In typical Washington fashion, the U.S. House moved with lightning speed to continue this blatant government giveaway and dig American taxpayers \$2 billion deeper into debt. Of

course the program is popular. People love free money. The problem is that this money is not free.

Cash for Clunkers takes billions of hard-earned dollars from American taxpayers and redistributes it to others for unnecessary purchases to stimulate one chosen industry. That industry, coincidentally, was recently taken over by the federal government.

In this difficult economy, the government should not manipulate consumers into buying new cars they may not be able to afford. Apparently, Washington learned nothing from its policies requiring lenders to lend money to homebuyers who could not afford their mortgage payments. That failed Washington policy was the primary cause of the recent crash in the housing market. Yet, failing to learn from its mistakes, Washington is at it again — artificially manipulating the free market and giving one industry a huge advantage over all the others with no consideration of consumers' ability to sustain the debt long term. Congress needs to stop experimenting with the world's largest economy and our children's future. It is time to move forward with ideas we know will work.

Here in Missouri, the General Assembly understands that the immediate task is for governments to use proven strategies to restore economic growth. Primarily, government needs to eliminate obstacles that get in the way of those who are willing to provide good jobs. Just a few short years ago, in a relatively good national economy, Missouri led the nation in job losses and bankruptcy filings. Our state budget was nearly \$1.1 billion short. Some suggested increased government and the largest tax increases in our state's history to solve the problem. Fortunately, we chose another path.

We chose to trust the people of Missouri to use their own hard-earned dollars more wisely than the government would — we cut taxes. We chose to trust the people of Missouri to create good jobs for each other and run their own businesses with better judgment than the government has — we repealed and reformed laws that had been imposing counter-productive and oppressive overregulation. The result? Missouri experienced the greatest increase in state revenue in the history of our state. We became a leader in job creation. Missouri is now one of the strongest states in the nation.

Missouri succeeded in building a firm foundation for short-term and long-term economic growth without raising taxes. This has left our state in a much better position than most others as we have experienced this very difficult time in the world's economic situation. Congress could learn a lot from our common-sense approach. It is my hope that the folks in Washington will wake up and realize all the borrowing and spending on unnecessary, counter-productive programs and government overhead is squandering the promise of prosperity and opportunity for our children and grandchildren.

As always, I welcome your ideas, questions and concerns about Missouri government. You may contact me at the Capitol as follows: [\(573\) 751-2234](tel:5737512234), [jack.goodman@senate.mo.gov](mailto:jack.goodman@senate.mo.gov) or by writing to Senator Jack Goodman, Missouri State Capitol, Room 331-A, [Jefferson City, MO 65101](http://www.missouri.gov).

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