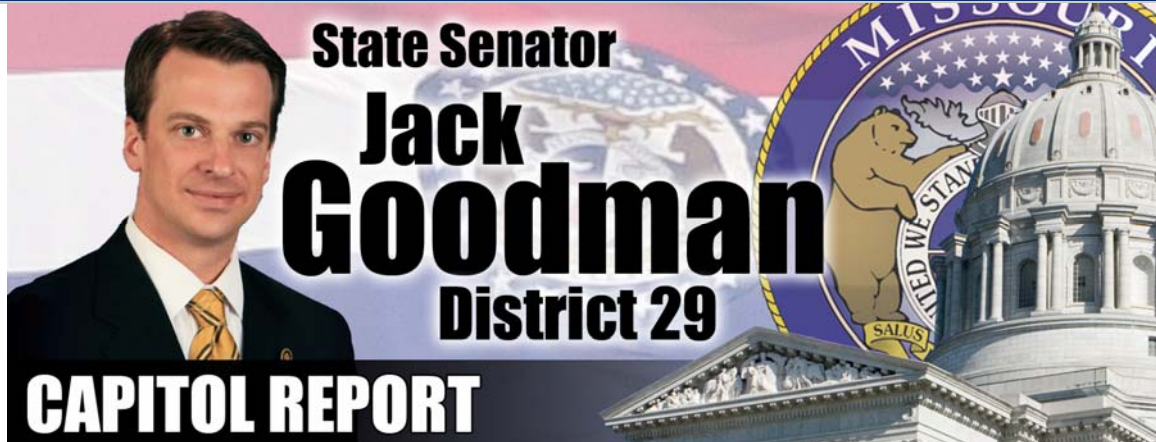


Week of October 19, 2009



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

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[Fighting Breast Cancer Through Awareness](#)

More than likely, you or someone you know has been affected by cancer. This devastating disease does not discriminate—it can strike anyone, at any age, regardless of background, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race or gender. Breast cancer, the most common type of cancer found in women—aside from skin cancer—can be particularly heart-wrenching. As we recognize October as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, it is critical that we educate people about breast cancer risk factors, the importance of regular exams, and the diagnosis and treatment of a disease that claims thousands of lives in the U.S. each year.

According to the American Cancer Society, an estimated 192,370 new cases of breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed among women in the United States in 2009 (approximately 1,910 new cases are expected in men). It also reports that an estimated 40,610 breast cancer deaths are expected in 2009 (40,170 women, 440 men). In Missouri, approximately 4,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 900 will die from the disease in 2009.

The chance of a woman having invasive breast cancer at some point during her life is about 1 in 8. The chance of dying from breast cancer is about 1 in 35. Though the odds are extremely high that you or someone you know will be affected by this disease, the American Cancer Society reports that breast cancer death rates are going down—mostly due to nationwide efforts to educate women about the early warning signs of the disease, which allows for an early diagnosis and effective treatment in many cases.

Here in Missouri, the General Assembly has taken action to bring awareness to the disease by funding the Show Me Healthy Women Program, which aims to reduce the number of breast cancer and cervical cancer cases in our state by providing free breast and cervical cancer screenings to age- and income-eligible women. Early detection is the key when it comes to survival rates and the availability of treatment options. When

caught early, the five-year relative survival rate of breast cancer is more than 95 percent.

The Show Me Healthy Women program provides crucial breast and cervical cancer screenings to under-served women across Missouri who may not otherwise have access to these basic tests. Screenings and other services are provided at more than 165 sites throughout Missouri at doctors' offices, community health centers, university-based teaching institutions, hospitals and clinics. If you are a woman between the ages of 35 and 64, are uninsured or underinsured and meet the income guidelines, you may be eligible to receive free or low-cost early detection screening services for breast or cervical cancer. For more information, contact Show Me Healthy Women by phone at 573-522-2845, by e-mail at info@dhss.mo.gov or online at www.dhss.mo.gov/BreastCervCancer to find the nearest provider and learn more about eligibility and making an appointment.

While there is no cure for breast cancer, and the disease unfortunately cannot be prevented, steps can be taken to decrease your risk and increase the chance of early detection, and as a result, increase the odds of receiving more effective treatment. Regular self-exams, mammograms and visits to your doctor are all critical to discovering the disease in its early stages. It is also important to manage the risk factors that are within your control, such as limiting alcohol use, exercising regularly and keeping a healthy weight. Though you may not be able to change your genetics, age or family history, lowering your risk of breast cancer through simple lifestyle changes may one day save your life.

For more information about breast cancer, including resources for breast cancer patients, survivors and caregivers, visit the American Cancer Society's website at www.cancer.org.

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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