



# WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler  
District 32



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**Week of January 26, 2009**

## **Our Number One Priority: Transparency for Missouri Taxpayers**

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There has been a lot of talk recently at all levels of government about federal funding that Missouri could receive from various economic stimulus measures working their way through Washington. In the governor's State of the State Address this week, he highlighted the federal recovery package, and ways that it might be used to advance his agenda, if the state should ultimately receive funding. The availability of federal funding should not detour us from our commitment to fiscal responsibility and accountability to the people we are elected to serve.

I applaud the governor for including in his supplemental recommendations the creation of a Federal Stimulus Fund. However, this is just the first step in making sure we are able to track every dollar that comes in—and in turn, every dollar that is subsequently spent. This is the only way that we can make sure the spending process remains transparent and open for all Missourians.

At the time of this writing, the U.S. House has sent a recovery package to the U.S. Senate, where it will face more serious debate. Thus, we cannot predict the way we might receive any federal funding. Whether through earmarks, enhanced Medicaid reimbursements, or other sources, we must make sure that we can track what we get and where it goes. This is my first priority and number one responsibility as chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee—ensuring that state spending takes place in a manner that is transparent with the priorities of Missourians at heart.

There is a long-standing tradition of bipartisanship and collegiality in the Senate Appropriations Committee. We are committed to making the appropriations process

open, honest and efficient. Our management of the state's budget is a sacred public trust and we are committed to being faithful stewards of the people's money. I cannot support spending that is not properly tracked, and I will not agree to a process that is not accountable to the taxpayers. We are facing many challenges, but we will continue to meet these by approaching any necessary spending responsibly and honestly.

*Senator Gary Nodler represents the people of Newton, Jasper  
and Dade counties in the Missouri Senate.*