



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



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Week of January 5, 2009

Bipartisan Cooperation During the 2009 Legislative Session

On January 7th, the Legislative session began. This is the start of the First Regular Session of the 95th General Assembly. I enjoyed the ceremony occasion and with the pomp and circumstance now over, we are ready to get to work on what looks to be a challenging legislative session.

We in the Missouri Senate are committed to work in a bipartisan way to solve the significant problems that challenge our state. Healthcare, education, and bolstering our economy through job creation are some of the major issues that we are sure to address this session. From the conversations that I have had with many of my Senate colleagues, there is willingness to work collaboratively from both sides of the aisle.

This attitude of bipartisan cooperation has also been prevalent during my conversations with the incoming governor and his staff. The legislative and executive branches can work together productively, regardless of political affiliation, if there is a sense of candid and open communication. The new administration has been positive in their initial approach and has been responsive to working in a healthy environment of bipartisan cooperation.

As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am also especially concerned with the budget process and the many challenges we are sure to face during this tough fiscal year. Missouri's budget has never been a partisan issue, as all of us work to create a spending plan that utilizes Missourian's tax dollars efficiently. Our job

as elected officials is to prioritize so that the most pressing needs of Missourians are addressed, and we cannot afford any other approach than a bipartisan one.

This is the start of my seventh session in the Missouri Senate, and I realized very quickly in my career as a lawmaker that the legislature works unpredictably. However, one can be sure that this session will feature healthy debate and lively discussion. I can honestly say that I am approaching the 2009 legislative session hopefully, and I am looking forward to working with my Senate colleagues to make a positive difference for our state.

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