



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



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Week of March 16, 2009

Mid-Session Review

JEFFERSON CITY – The Senate stands adjourned this week for the annual mid-session break. I wanted to take this time to sum up the legislation that has made progress so far this session.

Senate Bill 313, a bill I sponsored, is the first bill to receive “truly agreed and finally passed” status. We approved the legislation last week, and I recently discussed the importance of this bill as it relates to any federal stimulus funding that Missouri accepts. The bill creates two specific funds, the Federal Budget Stabilization Fund and the Federal Stimulus Fund, for Missouri’s portion of the federal economic stimulus package money.

We also have made progress on the annual supplemental spending bill, House Bill 14. The provisions of this bill address budget issues that were not passed or were not funded sufficiently for the whole year. When creating the budget, we work with the most up-to-date numbers in order to come up with the closest possible estimates so we can logically and responsibly appropriate state funds. There are occasions when these numbers change as the year progresses. This is the reason why a supplemental budget bill is passed each year. House Bill 14 also addresses an issue some felt was necessary that related to the above-mentioned Senate Bill 313. Transportation officials expressed concerns that language in SB 313, when signed into law, would delay federal stimulus funded highway projects in Missouri. Despite my doubts that the language would hinder these projects, I proposed an amendment to HB 14 to quell any such fears.

We have also recently worked on an omnibus transportation bill. Omnibus bills are comprehensive pieces of legislation containing many provisions that focus on the same general topic. Senate Bill 58 contains several provisions dealing with

transportation, including measures that would require police to identify the driver of a vehicle before issuing a ticket from a red light camera offense, ban texting while driving, and establish a program to memorialize those killed by drunk drivers on Missouri highways.

Another bill that has received a lot of attention this session is the Senate's major economic development bill (SB 45). The bill contains a provision expanding the Quality Jobs Act as well as several other tax credit expansions. Some concerns about tax credits have been discussed, and I am expecting the final version of the legislation to also involve some form of tax credit reform. This combination of business expansion incentives and protection for tax payers is taking some time, but ultimately will result in a more effective piece of legislation.

For the remainder of the legislative session, we will continue working diligently to complete our legislative priorities. Much of my work during the next eight weeks will involve crafting and passing a responsible spending plan. Lawmakers will return to the Capitol on Monday, March 23.

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