



# WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler  
District 32



Room 423 - State Capitol Bldg. - Jefferson City, MO 65101 – Contact Barbara Mustoe Phone: (573) 751-2306

**Week of March 30, 2009**

## **Valuing Missouri's Military Connections**

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On September 2, 1945, the Japanese surrendered in a ceremony on the deck of the USS Missouri. This was actually the third ship to bear our state's name, and this week I had the opportunity to meet the commander and crew of the new nuclear submarine that will be named for our state. The Submarine Missouri is still under construction in Virginia, and won't be ready to launch until late next year. The crew has actually been touring the state in order to spread awareness of the ship's construction and get a better feel for all our state has to offer. As one who has served in the United States Army and the Missouri National Guard, I am always enthusiastic to meet members of our military.

We will soon observe another military milestone here in the 32<sup>nd</sup> District. Joplin High School's Junior Reserve Officers Training Crops (JROTC) program is celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Joplin School District is actually the oldest, continuously operating JROTC program in the country. The 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration will take place on April 11<sup>th</sup>, and I encourage members of the community to come out and support the program. With the U.S. Army Old Guard and the Missouri National Guard Band participating in the event, it is sure to be an enjoyable experience.

Our state is proud of the veterans and military members living in Missouri, and I continue to work to make sure that these dedicated individuals' interests are represented, their needs addressed, and their service duly honored. One measure, passed in 2007, benefiting our retired soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, phases in an income tax exemption for seniors 62 or older receiving non-private retirement benefits (with an income threshold of \$85,000 for an individual or \$100,000 for a couple). For tax year

2009, veterans will be eligible for a 50 percent state income tax exemption on their military pension.

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This week was a productive one for the Missouri Senate as we sent several bills through the legislative process. This legislation included:

- Senate Bill 306, which would establish the Show-Me Health Coverage Plan, providing health care coverage through the private insurance market to low-income Missourians. Coverage for the first 35,000 participants would be funded by federal funds and existing tax dollars that currently go to pay hospitals for the care of the uninsured. The program could potentially expand to include those with higher incomes in the future. The bill received first-round approval on Wednesday.
- Senate Joint Resolution 3, which upon voter approval, would alter Missouri's constitution to create an exception to the ban on retroactive laws. This would allow the state to require all sex offenders to register with the state, even if they committed the crime before the sex offender registry law was enacted in 1995. The resolution now moves to the House for consideration.
- Senate Bill 207, which received a first-round vote of approval on Wednesday. The legislation would ensure Missourians are notified by businesses when their personal or financial information has been breached, a situation that could lead to identity theft and financial harm.

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