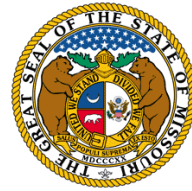




Kansas Senate Leader
[Steve Morris](#)

Bi-State Cooperation



Missouri Senate Leader
[Charlie Shields](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 23, 2009

Kansas, Missouri State Senate Leaders Cement Bi-State Cost Savings Cooperation

Shields and Morris Lay Foundation to Protect Taxpayers by Saving Money

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. –In light of the tough economy, Missouri Senate Leader Charlie Shields and Kansas Senate Leader Steve Morris met today in the Missouri State Capitol to develop a comprehensive bi-state partnership to protect taxpayers, bolster the economies of, and create jobs in these neighboring states that share a history, a border and common goal of improving the lives of Kansans and Missourians.

“Cost savings and job growth know no boundaries,” Shields said. “As families are tightening their belts, it is important we in state government think outside the box and try to find ways to work with our neighbors to save taxpayer dollars where we can. We had a great meeting that generated many ideas we will further examine to see if we can make them happen.”

“We each work to reach across the aisles in our respective chambers, so it seemed only natural to reach across the state line,” Morris said. “Senate Leader Shields and I are committed to find cost savings for our respective states. As resources tighten, any savings we can find will only help both states.”

Shields and Morris met though a program designed for state Senate leaders to share ideas and programs that have been successful in their states. Following their respective transportation departments’ lead of open communication, sharing information and resources, the senators recently decided to meet again to cement a bi-state partnership to outline ways the two states could more closely work together.

Shields and Morris discussed ways expand job opportunities in the bi-state Animal Health Corridor by recruiting new companies to the region and incenting existing companies to grow, by working together rather than competing against another.

They also brainstormed an array of cost-saving ideas, describing many as simple solutions that could add up to greater savings for the two states. Some of those ideas to consolidate functions and capture efficiencies include:

- Combining purchasing powers, such as food in our correctional facilities and bulk purchases for transportation like road salt
- Creating a dialogue between the two states’ Medicaid directors to look at ways to share resources and reduce costs
- Urging the two states’ transportation departments to further shared efforts
- Offering students slots in higher education degree programs not offered in their home state, such as expanding slots for Kansas students at Missouri’s dental school and expanding slots for Missouri students in Kansas’ architecture program
- Cooperating on public safety functions, including call centers and response and patrol of shared border cities and counties

The Senate Leaders said they plan to continue to work together during their terms.

For more information on the Missouri Senate, visit www.senate.mo.gov. And for further information on the Kansas Senate, visit www.klegislature.org.

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