

*Nothing is politically right  
that is morally wrong.*



*Free and fair discussion  
is the firmest friend of truth.*

MISSOURI SENATE  
JEFFERSON CITY

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**Senate Advances Bill Giving Missouri Citizens Right to Know  
About Budget Cuts**

***Proposed Bill Would Make Governor's Budget Daily Withholds Public***

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – Missouri citizens may soon be able to know how much, if any, budget cuts are made by a sitting governor to departments and programs with just the click of a mouse. The Missouri Senate today advanced [House Bill 544](#) that in its original form required the Commissioner of Administration to continue to maintain the web-based [Missouri Accountability Portal](#) ([mapyourtaxes.mo.gov](http://mapyourtaxes.mo.gov)) created in an executive order by former Gov. Matt Blunt. The portal currently consists of a searchable database that documents state purchasing of goods and services, as well as a searchable database of state employees and their salaries, tax credit recipients and tax delinquents.

Sen. Jack Goodman, R-Mt. Vernon, amended the bill to include the distribution of funds for state programs noting that Missouri taxpayers should know how their tax dollars are being spent.

“Missouri citizens have the right to know how their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent, and even more importantly, what programs and departments are being cut by the governor,” Goodman said. “Missourians deserve to have an open and honest government that lets them know what cuts are being made so they can plan how best to deal with the impact those cuts will have on their daily lives.”

The amended bill requires the sitting governor to submit a daily report documenting all amounts withheld from the state's operating budget for the fiscal year. It also requires the report to be posted on the portal website and be searchable by amounts withheld from each fund and by the total amount withheld from the operating budget.

Goodman cited a specific example where transparency would have shined light on a promise that has not been kept, to date, by Gov. Jay Nixon. On March 17, Nixon visited Branson, Missouri, where he announced he would restore \$1 million of more than \$3 million that had been cut to the tourism budget. A [KY3 report](#) noted Nixon said a majority of the funding would benefit Branson.

Goodman recently learned from the Missouri Division of Tourism that, to date, the governor has only restored \$250,000, not \$1 million, and the majority of the restored funding would be used to promote the 2009 Major League Baseball All-Star Game in St. Louis.

“Many people in Branson anticipated that the funding Nixon promised to restore would be restored right after his announcement,” Goodman said. “By making the daily department budgets - and any cuts made to them - public and searchable on the Missouri Accountability Portal, the people of Branson could easily track when and how much money was restored, rather than waiting in the dark for something that may never come.”

Senate Leader Charlie Shields, R-St. Joseph, commended Goodman for his move to make government more open to its citizens.

“Sen. Goodman faced a situation when transparency is the solution and I believe better accountability, from both the press and the people, will come as a result of his open government idea,” he said.

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