



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

The Rupp Report

*Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County***Column For Week of: January 25, 2010**[Website](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

The Real State of Our State

I had a strange experience during the State of the State speech on January 20. It seemed to me that Governor Nixon was taking credit for many of our past accomplishments made during prior sessions – accomplishments like tuition caps, education funding, and one of my priorities this session that stalled in the House of Representatives last year, autism reform. I am glad that the governor has joined the Republican pledge to not raise taxes, but I'm a bit confused about how he expects that to happen when he cannot reign in his spending.

The budget he submitted to the Legislature for fiscal year 2011 is not balanced, as state law requires, and this year's budget isn't balanced either. This year's budget is about \$200 million short, and frankly, there is a good portion of it based on an additional \$300 million in stimulus dollars and millions more on legislation that hasn't and won't pass the Legislature. Not only is the governor spending money the state doesn't have and depleting our reserves, he's now trying to spend money that doesn't even exist. How many of the 60,000 unemployed Missourians get to buy groceries on money that may or may not be in their bank accounts? Our state's citizens can't balance their checkbooks that way and neither should our state government.

The governor repeatedly promised that he would not raise taxes, but his State Tax Commission has voted to raise taxes by 29 percent on Missouri farmers' land. I have co-signed two bills, [SCR 32](#) and [SCR 35](#), which reject the plan to change the value of agricultural and horticultural land based on production. To raise taxes on our struggling farmers is like throwing gas on a fire.

I, along with a few colleagues in the Senate, have a plan to keep the governor's spending in check. We are focused on making sure our schools are fully funded without tax increases. While Gov. Nixon's job creation bill did not deliver, we're working on creating and maintaining jobs through less government intervention and smart tax dollar investment. While we're at it, we're going to make sure that our state stays out of the federal health care mess, and that we provide our own solution to make health care costs accessible and affordable. As of this writing, our governor has not promised to reject federal health care, like the voters of Massachusetts and so many other state governors already have done.

If all of these goals sound like a daunting task, they are. I am expecting vigorous debate about the validity and efficiency of every level of state government. Our state had some serious belt tightening last year, but we are not out of the woods, and that means we must work harder and scrutinize every single penny.

You're doing it at home, and we'll do it for your home state.

I'm in Jefferson City working for you. If you have any questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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