



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

The Rupp Report

*Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County***Column For Week of: February 1, 2010**[Website](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

Offering Protection For The Citizens of Missouri

If I had to sum up this week's Senate action with one word, that one word would be protection.

Missouri farmers received some Senate protection this week from the State Tax Commission, which had voted to raise taxes on farm land. By a vote of 30-3, we approved [Senate Joint Resolution 32 and 35](#) that says we disagree with the commission's decision to give new, higher values to agricultural and horticultural property. I agreed to co-sign this bill, because 1) I'm against raising any taxes, and 2) our farmers are dealing with enough issues like rising costs and volatile markets and we don't need burden them with additional worries about how they're going to pay their property taxes. Our state's farmers have enough on their mind as it is. The House of Representatives will examine the resolution soon, and as a Senate body we have vowed to get it passed in the time allotted for us to deny this unjust and badly-timed recommendation.

I testified on my [Senate Bill 725](#) this week before the Senate Health, Mental Health, Seniors and Families Committee. This bill protects taxpayers by requiring drug screenings for welfare recipients.

Basically, if a case worker suspects that one of their clients is using drugs, this gives that case worker the power to test their client. If there is a positive test, the drug abuser is required to participate in a substance abuse program. If the individual fails to complete the substance abuse program, or after completing the program still continues to test positive in subsequent drug tests, the individual will be ineligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. This proposed legislation protects the children of welfare recipients by making sure the kids of those recipients who are caught using drugs still get their benefits.

Finally, we're one step closer to real protection for those individuals affected by autism and their families. My autism insurance reform bill, [Senate Bill 618](#), was unanimously approved by the Senate Small Business, Insurance and Industrial Relations Committee and will soon be considered by the full Senate body.

This legislation prohibits health insurance carriers from denying coverage for this devastating neurological disorder that is affecting more and more Missouri children. It covers treatment plans, and sets boundaries on a maximum benefit in a calendar year. A family shouldn't have to go broke while they try to get their child the help they deserve.

I'm in Jefferson City doing what I can to protect the citizens of Missouri, and I consider it a great honor and privilege to have the opportunity to do so. If you have any questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please contact my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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