



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

The Rupp Report

Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County

Column For Week of: February 8, 2010

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Let's Keep State Government Out Of Your Bank Account

We're all starting to think about taxes, as the end of January signals the end of the mailings you get of all the different tax forms that apply to your finances. As sure as we're quickly approaching spring, it won't be long until the April 15th tax-filing deadline rolls around.

The governor has been thinking about your taxes as well. Individual income tax collections are down 11.2 percent for the year, from \$3.23 billion last year to \$2.88 billion this year. Individual collections are down 14.5 percent for the month of January, which led the governor to withhold another \$73.8 million in order to keep the budget balanced for this fiscal year. For those of you counting at home, the governor has withheld more than \$800 million in order to keep the budget balanced.

Now, instead of closing loopholes in the tax code, or determining a course of action in which the state government actually looks for even more ways to save money, our governor came up with a "big brother" idea. His thought: maybe the Department of Revenue should be able to get into our bank accounts and seize money when taxes go unpaid. Bank seizures are part of the proposed new laws the governor wants to balance his budget on, to the tune of \$22 million this year and \$49 million in 2012. Somehow I doubt that these new laws will get a warm reception in the Legislature.

There is no doubt that we might be coming out of a historic recession. While it is the time to rethink how we do business at the State Capitol, it is not the time to stick our hand into the pockets of those who might be distracted by record unemployment, 401K ruin, or health insurance benefits that are running out.

Since this idea of expanding the reach of government was floated out there, legislators like me have said we are vehemently opposed to such an idea. The governor is now saying that financial institutions that house your money can voluntarily offer your information, similar to what they do in the cases of failed child support payments.

Most Missourians are hard working people that pay their taxes on time, or, if they don't, they have a valid reason, and it's between them and the IRS and Department of Revenue. Missourians would prefer that no form of government have access to their money, without their knowledge or consent.

Just because there are extraordinary circumstances, that doesn't mean we're going to give extraordinary powers to the executive branch. I will be one of the first to sign up when it comes to keeping the government out of our accounts.

You can bank on it.

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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