



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

# The Rupp Report

*Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County***Column For Week of: June 14, 2010**[Website](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

## The Declining Budget and Missouri's Future

The end of June and the beginning of July signals the transition between fiscal years for our state. I have no doubt that this particular budget transition also signals a change in the role Missouri has for its government.

We saw this change begin during the last legislative session. When the dust settled, the Senate cut almost half a billion dollars from the budget the governor submitted. Many of you may remember that the governor's version of the budget wasn't very nimble, because a large portion of it counted on federal funds that did not materialize, and the governor's monetary position did not change until the budget process was well underway. Nevertheless, the Legislature found the savings and balanced the budget a full week ahead of schedule, while meeting the priorities of no new taxes, supporting education, and minimizing the impact on our citizens.

The dire revenue situation continues, despite some optimistic signs. The governor is stating that he will need to cut an additional \$350 million before the next fiscal year starts on July 1. Some of this difference comes from laws that were not enacted in time to realize the savings, and there is no doubt that the Legislature will revisit these efforts the next time they convene. This brings us to the bottom line: Missouri must rethink the role our state government plays in our daily lives and reduce and eliminate government waste.

I have great experience in examining our budget issues and advocating for smaller government. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I made sure we faced budget challenges head-on, rather than burying our heads in the sand and pretending that tough decisions didn't need to be made. As the chairman of the Social Programs group during the special "Rebooting Government" work day, I submitted several ideas for consolidating costs in the state's largest spending division of your tax dollars, ranging from department and division consolidation reform to changing the way those employees report to work. I believe we can leave no stone unturned when it comes to finding financial savings. You can still submit your ideas to streamline government at [www.senate.mo.gov/RebootMO.htm](http://www.senate.mo.gov/RebootMO.htm).

The Legislature will surely revisit these ideas in the months leading up to the next legislative session, as I believe the revenue situation for our state will only get worse. Even if revenue situations were to get better, we need to make state government as lean and efficient as it can be, because that's the kind of government that ensures economic prosperity.

I will continue to advocate for a right-sized government that is fiscally responsible for you and your family. As discussions progress to streamline state government, if you have any questions, please visit my website, email me, or call my office at (866) 271-2844.

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