



Senator Luann Ridgeway – Serving Clay County

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## Streamlining State Government

The Missouri Senate recently held a “Rebooting Government” work day to review hundreds of ideas to simplify and reorganize state government, as well as save money. Many of these proposed ideas are already making their way into legislation and through the lawmaking process. With budget cuts an unavoidable reality, it is encouraging to see lawmakers from both sides of the aisle join together to embrace intrepid and inventive solutions for saving taxpayer dollars.

One idea that I proposed to cut costs is to reduce the length of the legislative session. Currently, the General Assembly meets every year from the beginning of January through mid-May. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, most states meet for less than three months, and only 15 states have a longer legislative session than Missouri.

The longer we are in session, the more money we spend that we do not have. We need to be spending more time back home with our constituents, our businesses and our families, rather than spending almost five months out of the year in Jefferson City with bureaucrats and government insiders, and passing more legislation that doesn’t really help the people in our districts. I don’t think it is merely a coincidence that states that have a legislative session longer than six months have the highest budget deficits. The budget numbers show that the longer a legislature is in session, the worse off the taxpayers are. If my [Senate Joint Resolution 38](#) is passed by the Legislature and approved by voters, it would require the legislative session to end in late March rather than the middle of May.

I’ll continue to keep you updated on this and the other issues that are important to you as the 2010 legislative session winds down.

## Contact Information

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