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January 21, 2010

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## The Stouffer Report: *Let Your State Flags Fly*

Our mistrust of government was delivered with our colonial birth, when a distant government imposed taxes on the hard-working people it ignored. It started in Massachusetts, the cradle of our independence.

Looking for folks evading taxes on goods, government elites from afar sent inspectors into homes, without warrant or warning. When patriots disobeyed, they were punished with further taxation and blocked from receiving important items from trade at their ports. The frustration led to discontent, then hopelessness, followed by war.

Genius men of varying backgrounds, all well-read and some well-said — farmers, lawyers and doctors — met in private to decide a course of action. Most were supported by wives of even greater intelligence and self-sacrifice.


They wrote a document, a “Declaration of Independence,” that described a natural law — given by a Creator, not government. A Constitution followed, with ten amendments suggested by independent states.

The final of these amendments, the 10<sup>th</sup>, described the sovereignty of each state. A government was to be established at the local, county, state and then federal level. The idea was that folks closest to home govern best.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment reads, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”

Put simply: Congress was given the authority to regulate only [specific matters listed in the Constitution](#).

Today, politicians in Washington, D.C., have the federal government regulating everything under the sun, surpassing the items that Article 1, Section 8 in our nation’s Constitution, clearly describes.

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I have only been in politics for a relatively short time and there is still much to learn about the legislative process. I continue to be amazed by the constant federal government bypass or tactics to swap local control closer to home for bigger government for all.



Many of our current leaders have used our Constitution as a document that can be stretched into the boundaries of covering the issues of the day. That is not the original intent. Those topics were reserved for the states and local governments. The founders created the federal governments for the states, not vice-versa.

This year, a number of Legislatures are taking proactive steps in restoring their state's constitutionally-protected sovereignty. Many states are realizing the importance of working to oppose all efforts by the federal government to act beyond its U.S. Constitutional authority.

I am encouraged by the number of folks reading and studying about our Constitution today. Once we truly read and understand the document, we realize how far from reality both parties have led us in the past decade.

For this reason, I am working with my colleagues to pass a resolution in support of the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment and in support of our state's sovereignty.

Our constitution limits the authority of the federal government to specific powers. The states have the ability to enact laws that meet its individual needs, not a one-sized-fits-all decision for the entire union.

If we really want to send a message to Washington, D.C., we should start raising our Missouri flags!

*Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and a part of Clay.*

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

[bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov) | [www.senate.mo.gov/stouffer](http://www.senate.mo.gov/stouffer)  
State Capitol, Room 332, Jefferson City, MO 65101 | (866) 768-3987