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The Stouffer Report: *Pray for Missouri*

More and more each day, folks are getting involved in government and we are starting to see the results of this at the Missouri Capitol.

Hundreds of folks came to Jefferson City at the end of March to ask everyone to pray for our state, our leaders and our budget. People like you and me stood outside legislators' doors and prayed for them. We have tough decisions ahead of us and consulting our Creator is the perfect place to start.

Missouri's budget is in a tight spot. When there was a panic over budget shortfalls nearly 10 years ago, we were about \$250 million short. Now, the figure is closer to \$1 billion, and growing. The folks in the Missouri House cut as much as they could from the governor's proposed \$23 billion budget for fiscal year 2011. Now, it is in the hands of the Missouri Senate.

The [Missouri Family Network](#) sponsored the effort to get folks to pray for lawmakers. They have been around for 26 years and have never put together such an enormous event at the state Capitol. They realize, just like the rest of us, government can only go so long before it has to re-examine how it spends taxpayer dollars. Leaders from every denomination came together to quietly rally lawmakers in our offices to drive home the importance of passing a balanced budget which will continue to provide only the necessary services for our state and its citizens.

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The timing of the 40 days of fasting and the day the General Assembly has to have the budget finished coincides with the [National Day of Prayer](#). As I said earlier, the budget has to be finished and on the governor's desk by 6 p.m. on Friday, May 7. The National Day of Prayer falls one day before this deadline. The theme for this year's National Day of Prayer follows suit with not only the challenges we are seeing in Missouri, but all throughout the country.



The Missouri Family Network is asking folks to be creative with getting friends and neighbors together. Churches throughout rural Missouri are hearing about the efforts and are ready to accommodate everybody who wants to take part or pray for their leaders. This comes at a time when we hear so many news stories about church membership declining and fewer people believing in God. However, this is far from the case, especially in rural Missouri, where folks' deep-rooted beliefs go hand-in-hand with their day-to-day values.

I was able to take the time to pray with citizens who stopped by my office this week during session. They believe strongly in the power of prayer, and so do I. As I have said before, we have a tremendous opportunity in Missouri to make government work better and spend less money. Getting to this stage will take some time and will not be easy. With your help and with all the prayers that are being offered, I have no doubt we will make it through this challenge and leave a better future for the next generation of Missourians.

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.

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