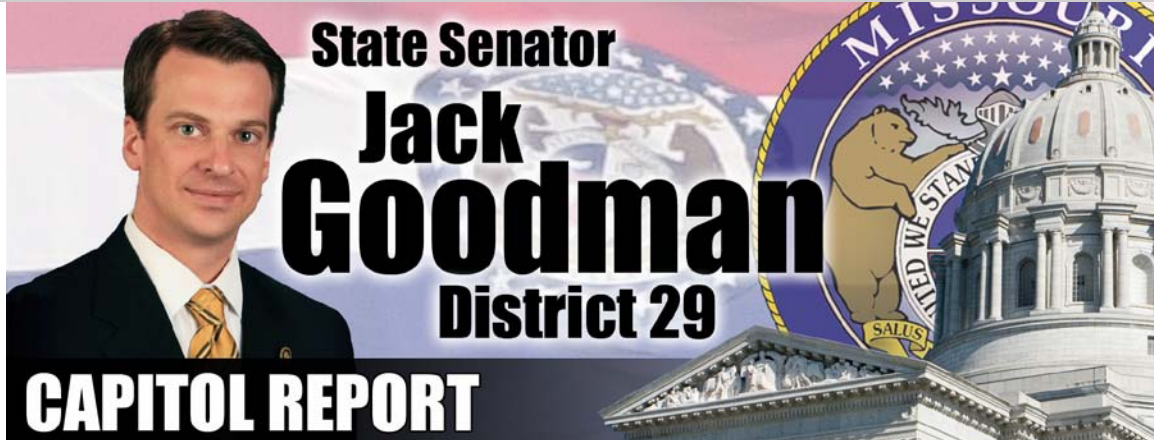


Week of March 8, 2010



CAPITOL REPORT

Senator Jack Goodman – Serving Barry, Lawrence, McDonald, Ozark, Stone and Taney Counties

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Protecting Missourians from an Overreaching Federal Government

As the health care debate in Washington once again reaches fevered pitch, it looks increasingly likely that Congressional leaders will ram their bill through, despite the opposition of the American people. The potential implications for Missouri mean we must get serious about taking the necessary action to protect Missourians and ensure the federal government cannot overstep its bounds.

The Founding Fathers had the foresight and understanding of mankind's inherent desire for freedom to pen a Constitution that, if upheld, would protect an individual's right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution, the final in the Bill of Rights, reserved to the states all powers not specifically delegated to the federal government. The rationale behind this important protection is that most of the decisions of government should be made closest to the voters affected by them, where the voters can better monitor the workings of their government and speak out. Now, almost 220 years later, this governing principle is in genuine peril.

While the federal government was designed to perform a few specific functions, the Founding Fathers appropriately limited its scope of power. Unfortunately, in the time since the adoption of the Bill of Rights, the federal government has slowly and methodically pushed beyond the bounds of the 10th Amendment and taken on areas of appropriation, legislation and regulation that should be handled closer to the voters. In 1791, Thomas Jefferson wrote that he considered the 10th Amendment the basis of our nation's founding document, and warned of the

consequences of violating this principle, saying, "To take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specially drawn around the powers of Congress, is to take possession of a boundless field of power, no longer susceptible of any definition."

The federal health care proposal on the verge of being rammed through Congress via a procedure called "reconciliation" (a process traditionally reserved for matters relating to the budget and deficit) is such a step toward that boundless field of power. This federal monstrosity would impose hundreds of millions of dollars in additional spending on Missouri's already strapped budget, while also forcing Missourians to enter private contracts with other private parties or face tax penalties backed up by the threat of imprisonment. Even without the budget busting costs of this bill (in the face of outlandish claims that it will actually *reduce* the deficit), its invasion into the private lives of citizens is utterly un-American. It all boils down to more federal government control, less personal freedom and spending mandates that most states will not be able to afford, particularly in light of their own budget troubles.

Perhaps in the end we will find that this health care fiasco has done us a favor. People are waking up to the realization that the federal government is overstepping its bounds and something must be done to stop it. That is why I have sponsored Senate Joint Resolution 34, which will give the Governor, the General Assembly and the people (acting by initiative petition) the authority to compel the Missouri Attorney General to file suit challenging federal laws that violate the 10th Amendment. Additionally, I co-sponsored Senate Joint Resolution 25, along with several of my colleagues, which, if approved by Missouri voters, would change our state's constitution to prohibit any laws mandating that private citizens enter into private contracts for health care or participate in government run health programs. This legislation was recently passed out of committee and is now ready to be taken up for debate on the Senate floor. We must preserve our ability to make decisions when it comes to the health care of Missouri residents.

In the not-so-distant past, our federal government operated under the assumption that the less it intruded into the lives of Americans, the better off we all would be. In fact, our entire democracy was founded on the principles of limited government, respecting the rights of the individual and promoting self-responsibility. We must return to our nation's roots of self-sufficiency and personal freedom, and we must begin by limiting the federal government to its Constitutionally defined powers.

As always, I welcome your ideas, questions and concerns about Missouri government. You may contact me at the State Capitol as follows: (573) 751-2234, jack.goodman@senate.mo.gov or by writing to Senator Jack Goodman, Missouri State Capitol, Room 331-A, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

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