

For Immediate Release

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# SHARING A VIEW OF THE STATE

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Issues and Comments – 33<sup>rd</sup> Senatorial District

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*Senator*

***Chuck Purgason***

It is hard to go anywhere these days without hearing the overwhelming concerns common-sense citizens have with the problems in Washington and in Jefferson City. While most folks want solutions to the problems we face as a country, they are not happy with what they have seen over the past year from Congress or the Executive branch of our federal government.

Many people have voiced their concerns with the federal health care proposals, out of control government spending and the ever growing \$14,000,000,000,000 (trillion) national deficit, but it seems that no one is listening.

Like you, I am concerned about utopian claims from Washington that government can provide more services at less cost. I am also deeply concerned about any proposed federal bureaucratic expansion that would cost state taxpayers another \$200 million at a time when the state cannot fund the programs that are now in place.

To ensure your voice is heard by the ruling majority in Congress, your Missouri Senate is working this week to send a message that enough is enough. This week your Missouri Senate pushed back again working for the passage of “The Health Care Freedom Act” (SJR 25). This important legislation would allow the people of Missouri an opportunity to vote for a constitutional amendment that would block mandatory participation in Washington’s total government-run health care proposal.

This measure, if passed by the voters, would not allow fines or penalties to be levied against employers and individuals who opt out of government-run care and pay for their own health care. I believe we should protect our individual freedom and not let government bureaucrats gain more control over our lives. I think it is very unfortunate that the states are put into this position. I wish our congress would have addressed some of these issues before it got to the point that it is today, but those opportunities have passed us by.

The Senate Appropriations Committee continued its work this week with discussions on spending priorities and spending cuts to the Governor’s recommendations for the state’s Fiscal Year 2011 budget which begins July 1. It is no secret that deeper spending cuts will have to be

made for next year's budget, but thus far we are just trimming around the edges and rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

At some point in the budget process, the politicians will have to accept the facts, make the spending cuts and balance the budget. However, I expect it may take a little longer than the regular legislative session for the Governor and the General Assembly to come to an agreement on difficult budget cuts. It looks like I may need to contact my landlord and extend the lease on my apartment.

I cannot stress to you enough the severity of the budget this year and even greater problems next year. With that in mind, the Senate this week broke from tradition on floor debate and split up into groups of four to study reforms to our state government. The group to which I was assigned dealt with tax credits and economic development. The department put forth a plan to rearrange our 61 tax credit programs into six more easily managed tax credit departments.

My honest opinion is that government does a really poor job at economic development and we actually create no new jobs. The only jobs we create are ones that produce more red tape and bureaucracies. The private sector is the area that creates jobs --- our small business owners across the state. 92% of the jobs created in this state are created by small businesses, but we spend millions of dollars per year dangling out tax credits and incentives to lure 8% of the businesses to the state at the expense of the ones that are already here.

I think we need to explore a more common-sense business development philosophy such as telling business people that we will lower your taxes, eliminate the red tape of government, lower the rules and regulations and, basically, leave small businesses alone and allow them to do what they do best --- grow and create jobs for the future. Given the current job situation, apparently what we have been doing in economic development is not proving to be successful. Sometimes simple answers for complex problems are better because we as a government have allowed simple problems to become so complex.

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. I can be reached in Jefferson City at (573)751-1882, e-mail to [chuck.purgason@senate.mo.gov](mailto:chuck.purgason@senate.mo.gov) or write to me at 201 West Capitol Avenue, Room 420, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

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