



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STATE OF MISSOURI
JEFFERSON CITY
(573) 751-3222
<http://go.missouri.gov>

MATT BLUNT
GOVERNOR

ROOM 216
STATE CAPITOL
65101

January 24, 2007

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE PEOPLE OF MISSOURI:

When Missourians elected me to serve as Governor, I pledged to work with you to move Missouri in a new direction. Two years later, we have made tremendous strides in fulfilling this pledge to the citizens of our great state. My top priorities continue to be: education; health care reform; economic growth; and government accountability. We have put children first by making education our highest priority. We have implemented policies that are spurring economic growth, allowing the creation and retention of family-supporting jobs. We are working to increase access to affordable, quality health care. We have modernized state government and made it more efficient. The path has not always been easy, but we have changed course to bring the state's priorities together with the people's priorities. For the third year in a row, I present you with a balanced budget; a budget that puts Missouri families first.

With my Fiscal Year 2008 budget, our schools will again receive full funding of the school foundation formula – a good formula that is sensible, equitable, and based on students' needs. We also recognize that higher education is a vital investment in our future. In my budget, our colleges and universities will receive a substantial increase that will be accompanied by a proposal requiring better accountability and performance standards, for those schools.

My budget will make a significant investment in improving Missourians' access to quality health care and reducing the number of uninsured. My budget recommendation includes increased funding to maintain health care coverage for the more than 825,000 Missourians who depend on taxpayers for their health care. I am also proposing funding for the foundation of the new MO HealthNet program to transform Missouri's health care safety net for people with low incomes into a program that delivers better access, better quality and promotes better health to those it serves. I am also recommending \$60 million to fund capital projects for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) that will improve access to care for low income, uninsured and rural Missourians. The Fiscal Year 2008 budget continues to emphasize the importance of health care information technology and provides additional funding to ensure the safety of individuals within Missouri's mental health system.

My budget plan is again built on the belief that government, like the citizens it serves, must live within its means. I will continue to work with my cabinet to ensure we are good stewards of tax dollars and that services are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Finally, I believe state resources have been generated by our pro-jobs, pro-growth economic policies, enabling us to provide tax relief for Missouri seniors by ending the cuts to their Social Security. In addition, I propose a tax deduction for individuals who plan for their future by purchasing long-term care insurance. I look forward to working with everyone to enact my Fiscal Year 2008 budget and accompanying legislative initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Blunt". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Matt Blunt