



GOVERNOR OF MISSOURI
JEFFERSON CITY
65102

JEREMIAH W. (JAY) NIXON
GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 720
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January 20, 2016

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE PEOPLE OF MISSOURI:

Over the past seven years, we have kept our strict fiscal discipline while steering Missouri through difficult fiscal times. We balanced the budget each year and reduced the size of state government, all while making responsible investments in priorities like public education, economic development and mental health.

Today, our AAA credit rating is intact and our economy is moving forward. In fact, Missouri leads the nation in new business creation and our unemployment rate recently dropped to its lowest point in nearly a decade.

This sound financial management, coupled with continued economic growth, will allow us to make smart investments in the upcoming fiscal year. Our shared values will continue to unite us: maintaining fiscal discipline, strengthening our public schools, making college more affordable, improving the health of our communities, and investing in business creation.

- **Balancing the budget and maintaining fiscal discipline.** Under my budget, state government will continue to get smaller, smarter and more efficient.
- **Investing in education from preschool through college:** When our public schools thrive our communities thrive. We must increase funding for early childhood education and K-12 classrooms, while continuing to demand greater accountability and results. And by freezing tuition and investing in college scholarships, we can continue to make college more affordable for Missouri families.
- **Strengthening our mental health safety net:** For Missourians with severe mental illness, early intervention is critical in order to prevent more costly and dangerous consequences down the road. We have already made tremendous strides in this area and this year we can do even more with a crisis prevention program that will make our communities safer, healthier and stronger.
- **Improving developmental disability services:** This year, we will continue our successful Partnership for Hope, ensure there is no wait list for in-home Medicaid services for individuals with developmental disabilities, and expand access to treatment for children with autism.
- **Creating jobs and spurring business creation:** While the rate of new business creation has stalled in most states, Missouri is making targeted investments to increase business start-ups and create jobs.
- **Reforming Medicaid:** Working Missourians deserve affordable health care. By strengthening and reforming Medicaid, we can achieve that goal and bring our taxpayer dollars home to Missouri.

I look forward to working with you to keep Missouri moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jay Nixon".

Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor