



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August, 30, 2007

Senate Approves Bridge Building, Economic Development Bills

JEFFERSON CITY — The Missouri Senate yesterday (8/29) approved two bills addressed by the governor in a call to special session. Debate went into the early morning hours as senators discussed House Bill 1, an economic development package, and House Bill 2, a measure designed to get the Missouri Department of Transportation's (MoDOT) bridge repair started.

House Bill 1 is an omnibus economic development bill brought about by the veto of HB 327, an economic development bill passed during the regular session and vetoed by the governor due to concerns over cost. Lawmakers worked throughout the summer to craft a new economic development bill with a price tag of approximately \$70 million a year, deemed to be more fiscally palatable compared to the approximately \$200 million cost of the vetoed HB 327. House Bill 1 includes increases in the amount of credits available for businesses participating in the *Quality Jobs Act*. Qualifying businesses are those that provide jobs with pay above the county's average wage and pay 50 percent of health insurance costs for employees. Similar cap increases are contained in the legislation for Enhanced Enterprise Zones — an area with the potential to create sustainable jobs.

The bill also includes provisions creating tax credits for companies redeveloping land in a qualified distressed area as a part of the Distressed Areas Land Assemblage Tax Credit Act, encouraging production companies to film in the state with Film Production Tax Credits, and providing Qualified Beef Tax Credits for ranchers selling finished beef cattle.

Bridges in Missouri will receive repairs and replacements sooner thanks to provisions in House Bill 2. The Safe and Sound bridge repair program, which will repair or replace more than 800 bridges in the state, was stalled by state bonding statutes. The tragic bridge collapse in Minneapolis-St. Paul encouraged the legislature to act quickly on the project, which had been in the works long before the tragedy in Minnesota. House Bill 2 provides a new set of rules for projects of this magnitude and length of time by changing performance bonding laws so the transportation department can contract to have the bridges fixed over the next five years and maintained for another 25 years. The bridge project's total cost is expected to be between \$400-600 million, and lawmakers stress that the agency will need no additional appropriations to pay that cost.

The bridge bill now goes to the governor; the economic development bill has been approved by the House and now moves to the governor.

For more information about this event or legislation in the Missouri Senate, visit www.senate.mo.gov. To contact [Senate Communications](#), dial (573) 751-3824 or send an email to newsroom@senate.mo.gov.