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The third week of Missouri's 2010 legislative session was highlighted by Governor Jay Nixon's State of the State address on Wednesday evening. Governor Nixon's speech focused on his efforts to stimulate job creation through the implementation four economic development legislative measures:

"Missouri First," which he called "my loyalty program for businesses that are already here. They'll go to the head of the line for financial incentives to help expand plants or payrolls."

The "Missouri Science and Innovation Reinvestment Act" (MOSIRA) that "will reinvest a small part of the taxes paid by existing bio-tech firms in Missouri, to recruit new ones." The state already has a pool of 1,000 such companies and should focus on attracting more, the governor said.

"Training for Tomorrow," aimed at directing young people to "jobs in growing fields, like lab techs, nursing aides, surveyors and mechanics," by giving the state's community colleges "the flexibility to enlarge training programs where there's high demand."

"Show-Me Heroes," a new jobs initiative that helps promote jobs for returning veterans. The leader of the new effort, Lt. Col. Alan Rohlfing of the Missouri Army National Guard, will "be calling on employers all over the state, telling them about our disciplined, dedicated, hard-working veterans," the governor said. "When a job comes open, I want a veteran's resume on the top of the stack, so they get first crack at an interview."

Governor Nixon also delved in to the issues of declining state revenues and ethics reform in his speech. In fact, just an hour before Nixon took the microphone, his budget director announced the latest \$200 million in cuts to the current year's budget, forced by lower-than-expected state revenue. Nixon also emphasized his support for ethics measures for legislators, and called for the return of restrictions on campaign donations that the Republican-controlled Legislature tossed out in 2007.

Grow-Me State Initiative

On Tuesday the House Job Creation and Economic Development Committee held a hearing on HB 1512, sponsored by Rep. Tim Flook (R-Liberty), which would create the Grow-Me State Initiative. This initiative, promoted by the St. Louis RCGA, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Missouri Biotechnology Association, establishes provisions to encourage the investment in and the development of technology-based early stage Missouri businesses. The committee did not take any action on the bill.