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## CAMPAIGN AD BUZZ | McCaskill criticizes Talent on Medicaid

**WHAT:** Claire McCaskill's "real Missouri voices" ads criticizing Jim Talent's votes on Medicaid.

**THE CENTRAL CLAIM:** That Talent voted to cut Medicaid, and 90,000 Missourians were "kicked off" the program.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:** Jim Talent, as a member of the House and later in the Senate, did vote for proposals to reduce the growth of Medicaid spending. Medicaid is a joint federal-state program to provide health care for the poor.

Despite those votes, overall Medicaid spending (including hospital reimbursements) in Missouri grew from \$4.1 billion in 2001 to \$6.2 billion in 2005, according to a study by the Urban Institute.

It is not fair or accurate to imply, as the commercials do, that Talent's votes caused the reduction in eligibility for an estimated 90,000 Medicaid patients in Missouri. Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt and the General Assembly made those reductions. If the state had chosen to fully fund Medicaid, by cutting other spending or raising taxes, the federal cutbacks in Medicaid growth wouldn't have made any difference.

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