

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) responded this evening to the State of the Union speech delivered by President Obama to a joint session of Congress.

"The president understands that this Congress is not going to hand him a blank check. My colleagues in the House of Representatives and I are very concerned about the flood of regulations from this administration, the health care law, and the growth of government in general. All of this costs us jobs in Missouri. The American people want to see some accountability from the president, and that is why we hope he will strike a different tone tonight," Emerson said.

Emerson also pointed out the show of support for civility in Congress demonstrated by her colleagues who sat with members of the opposite party.

"I don't think the American people send us to Congress so we can call each other names and insult people who don't agree with us 100 percent. It's important that we all work to find some common ground, whether we are in the political majority or the political minority," Emerson said. "Our Congress thrives on strong convictions and disagreement - we need those things - but our debate should also be respectful. Republicans and Democrats showed tonight that they are rededicated to civil discourse."

Emerson watched the speech from her home in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, as she was unable to travel to Washington, DC, after slipping on ice and fracturing her arm this weekend.