



MISSOURI SENATE  
JEFFERSON CITY

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## Senator Matt Bartle Pre-files Legislation Strengthening Child Sexual Assault Laws

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JEFFERSON CITY – State Sen. Matt Bartle, R-Lee’s Summit, today pre-filed legislation for the 2006 session that will institute tougher laws against dangerous child molesters. Pre-filing legislation, which begins December 1 of each year, can expedite certain aspects of the legislative process.

“I have repeatedly promised to crack down on sexual predators in our state, and I intend to follow through on my word by introducing tough legislation,” Bartle said. “We need to send a message to sex offenders in Missouri that we will protect the safety of our children and will not tolerate heinous assaults on the weakest and most vulnerable among us.”

The new legislation contains two key elements. First, the bill requires persistent sexual offenders to spend the rest of their lives behind bars. Individuals who have pleaded guilty to or have been found guilty of forcible rape, statutory rape in the first degree, forcible sodomy or statutory sodomy and have been found by the court to be persistent sexual offenders will have to serve life in prison without eligibility for early release.

The other key point applies to mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines for first-time offenders. Under the legislation, first-time sexual offenders guilty of first degree rape or sodomy will serve a minimum of 25 years in prison without the possibility of early release. This sentence will be increased to 35 years if certain aggravating factors are present.

“Our children might be helpless against predators, but the rest of us are not,” Bartle said. “It is time we take a stand to protect Missouri’s kids and to send a clear message that these vile acts will not be tolerated.”

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