



MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

John Cauthorn
18th Senate District

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 426
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101
PHONE (573) 751-6858
TDD (573) 751-3969
FAX (573) 751-6900
EMAIL john_cauthorn@senate.state.mo.us

For Immediate Release:
November 30, 2005

Contact: Steven Cowen
(573) 751-6858

Sen. Cauthorn Pre-Files Bills: Focus on Farms, Families, Homes

Legislative Priorities Culminate Tenure in Jefferson City

JEFFERSON CITY, MO - Protecting Second Amendment rights, promoting Missouri agriculture, and ensuring safe communities has been Senator John Cauthorn's focus during his five years in elected office. Tomorrow, December 1, Cauthorn will pre-file legislation continuing his efforts on these issues.

Cauthorn's top three legislative priorities for the 2006 legislative session include a 10-percent ethanol requirement for gasoline sold in Missouri, tougher sentences and penalties for child sex offenders, and more freedoms allowing Missourians to defend themselves and their homes.

"As my last legislative session quickly approaches, my number one goal is finishing my work for the people of northeast Missouri," said Cauthorn. "We must be able to defend our homes, protect our children, and encourage renewable fuels that help our farmers and our economy."

10% Ethanol Requirement

Cauthorn's ethanol requirement directs that beginning January 1, 2007, gasoline sold in Missouri must be blended with at least 10-percent ethanol. Consumers wishing to buy higher-octane fuel may do so.

Ethanol is a clean-burning, renewable, domestically produced product made from fermented agricultural products such as corn.

All motor vehicles manufactured since the 1970s can run on a 10-percent blend and do not require engine modifications. When used in vehicles, ethanol reduces carbon dioxide, a major contributor to global warming, and significantly lowers carbon monoxide levels.

"Using 10-percent ethanol in gasoline is a win-win. We can reduce our need for foreign oil while adding value to our agriculture community," said Cauthorn

-more-

Missouri will need 260 to 280 million gallons of ethanol to meet this requirement. This increased usage will result in \$15 million every year for MO corn producers.

“For years big oil companies have mandated we buy their product and look where gas prices are today. It is time for solutions benefiting our farmers and our energy supply – not big oil executives,” said Cauthorn.

Currently 64% of our nation’s energy needs come from other countries. That number will hit 77% by 2025.

Montana and Hawaii have recently passed 10-percent ethanol requirements, while Minnesota is increasing their requirement from 10 to 20 percent.

Castle Doctrine

Cauthorn’s work for protecting Second Amendment rights continues with the “Castle Doctrine” legislation. Under the bill, if a criminal breaks into your home or vehicle, you may presume he is there to do bodily harm. Force may be used for protection.

A potential victim’s “duty to retreat” is removed if a person is attacked in a place they have a right to be. Additionally, the bill protects against criminal prosecution and civil litigation for those defending themselves from criminal attack.

“This vital piece of legislation ensures Missourians can protect themselves and their homes from dangerous criminals,” said Cauthorn. “We want the law to clearly protect the rights of law abiding citizens, not criminals.”

Modeled after a Florida law enacted earlier this year, the legislation:

- Provides a person is justified in using force against a perpetrator when the person reasonably believes that force is necessary to defend themselves against the use of unlawful force, or to protect personal property.
- Use of deadly force is justified if necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm.
- Provides immunity from criminal prosecution for a person who is justified in using force to protect themselves and their property from a perpetrator
- If defendant is immune from prosecution, court shall award attorney fees, court costs, and compensation for loss of income, etc.
- Protects law enforcement officials that declare their presence.

The provisions do not apply if the perpetrator has right to be in, or is a resident of, the dwelling or vehicle. Further, they do not apply if the person who uses defensive force is engaged in unlawful activity.

“We have crafted a bill that protects innocent citizens, ensures law enforcement’s safety, and makes a criminal think twice before entering someone’s home,” said Cauthorn.

Sex Predators

Sex offenders who prey on children will face tougher sentencing and penalties according to Cauthorn’s sexual predator legislation. The bill calls for “25 to Life” sentences for those convicted of rape, sodomy, child molestation or sexual trafficking of children under age 14.

“Sexual predators are a menace to society, their heinous act should be punished to the fullest extent possible,” said Cauthorn. “Parents today are afraid to let their children play freely like they once did as kids. We must keep sex offenders behind bars.”

-more-

Missouri has been stiffening penalties for sex offenders. Further, registered sex offenders can be found online through local law enforcement web sites. Cauthorn's legislation incorporates the much-needed "25 to Life" clauses from Jessica's Law passed in Florida and many other states.

This bill imposes stiff penalties, including:

- 25 years to life for forcible rape when the victim is less than 14.
- 25 years to life for forcible sodomy if child is under 14.
- 25 years to life for child molestation in the first degree.
- 25 years to life for sexual trafficking of a child.
- Sex offenders must provide description of vehicle when registering as a sex offender (currently must provide personal information, fingerprints and photograph).
- Requires sex offenders to report to county law enforcement bi-annually instead of annually.
- Within 10 days of sex offender completing registry, county law enforcement may notify neighbors living within one-mile of offender's primary residence.
- Makes it a Class D felony, 1-4 years, for knowingly assisting a sex offender in eluding law enforcement.

"Cracking down on sex offenders is critical to ensuring safe communities for our families to live," said Cauthorn. "Missouri will not be a safe haven for sex offenders."

Sen. Cauthorn represents Missouri's 18th Senate District. He can be reached at his capitol office at (573) 751-6850. You can also visit his web page by going to www.senate.mo.gov/cauthorn.