



# MISSOURI SENATOR MAIDA COLEMAN

5<sup>TH</sup> SENATORIAL DISTRICT

MISSOURI STATE CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 220



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Contact: Sen. Maida Coleman (573) 751-2606

As the Missouri Senate reaches the halfway mark of its legislative year, it is worthwhile to consider what has been accomplished thus far. Certainly, it has been a session with long periods of cooperation between the two parties with some significant disagreements.

I am proud to have led the Democratic caucus as we helped craft two significant pieces of protective legislation: a bill for survivors of loved ones which prevents demonstrations at funerals and legislation which tightens sexual offender law, particularly in regard to children. We have all been appalled by recent cases where anti-war demonstrators invaded the sanctity of funerals for fallen soldiers. It is disgusting and merited our attention, and I am glad the governor has signed it into law.

The sex offender measure took a little more time, but I am confident that our final work, which has been sent to the House, is deservedly strong on abuse issues without becoming too draconian. We dramatically enhanced many penalties for sex offenders, but we did so with an eye toward making the punishment fit the crime.

We have had our differences in the first quarter of 2006. Democrats are staunchly opposed to a mandatory voter photo ID bill which we believe will infringe on basic voting rights, especially for the elderly, the poor, minorities and the disabled. We simply refuse to sit idly by while this ill-conceived idea threatens to disenfranchise some of our most vulnerable voters and prevent as many as 170,000 Missourians from being able to vote in November. Trying to make the sweeping changes mandated in this bill within a 60-day window is undoable, and Republicans will face our dedicated opposition as long as they refuse to consider a more realistic alternative.

We have much to do before May 12 arrives signaling an end to the 2006 legislative session. I and my caucus pledge continued support for issues which benefit Missouri's working families and continued opposition against those ideas which threaten their livelihoods.

Sincerely,

Sen. Maida Coleman (D-St. Louis)  
Senate Minority Floor Leader