



John Loudon
7th Senate District

MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 422
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

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Contact: Mike Reid
(573) 751-9763

Anti-Crime Legislation Advances

Measure targets Internet predators and child pornographers

Sen. John Loudon today announced that the Senate Appropriations Committee today took a big step in helping make Missouri children safer. The committee approved an amendment proposed by Sen. Loudon to provide an initial \$250,000 for investigating Internet sexual predators and child pornographers.

“The Appropriations committee has approved \$250,000 to investigate sexual predators that target children,” Sen. Loudon said. “We need more, but this is a great first step. Eventually I would like to see about \$3 million appropriated so we can hire more online detectives across the state.”

With the increasing availability of the Internet, more and more children have been exposed to solicitations from sexual predators. NBC Dateline and other news programs have highlighted this issue dramatically. There are even “child molester chat rooms,” where child predators compare notes on how to groom and seduce children and trade child pornography. The problem is a national and international one. Sexual predators have traveled from other states to Missouri in an attempt to entice children.

“According to the FBI, who visited our office several weeks ago, child pornography is much worse than many people think,” Sen. Loudon said. “It sometimes includes bestiality, sadomasochism, and the rape of infants. It makes me very uncomfortable to even talk about this, but the danger child pornographers present needs to be explained, and law-enforcement resources need to be increased so these individuals can be taken off the streets.”

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Sen. Loudon has been working with Missouri sheriffs, police chiefs and online detectives to build support for expanding investigations to an ever-growing problem. In addition to seeking more money, he and Rep. Bob Dixon, R-Springfield, have filed companion Senate and House bills, SB 1047 and HB 1972, respectively. Their legislation proposes to create a grant program within the Missouri Department of Public Safety to hire and train online detectives and computer forensic personnel to go after child pornographers and sexual predators who use the Internet to lure children.

“We have put in countless hours working with law enforcement to study this issue and procure funding to safeguard our children, and that hard work is starting to pay off,” Sen. Loudon said. “But I assure you that we will not rest until this program of investigating Internet abuse is fully funded and our children are adequately protected.”

For a link to the text for Senate Bill 1047, visit www.senate.mo.gov/06info/pdf-bill/intro/SB1047.pdf.

A bill summary is located at http://www.senate.mo.gov/06info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=105132.

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