



John Loudon  
7<sup>th</sup> Senate District

# MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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## Governor Signs Bill Funding Cyber-Crimes Task Forces

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JEFFERSON CITY – The governor yesterday signed a bill putting \$250,000 in state funds toward the hiring and training of law enforcement officers to track down sexual predators and child pornographers who use the Internet to prey on children. The cyber-unit task force was created by an amendment that Sen. John Loudon, R-Chesterfield, succeeded in attaching to House Bill 1698, a comprehensive measure strengthening laws against sexual predators in Missouri.

“As our children have increasing access to the Internet, cyber predators have increasing access to our children,” Loudon said. “The appropriations called for in House Bill 1008 will help counteract the alarming statistics that indicate our children are in harm’s way when they surf online.”

According to a recent report by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 1 in 5 children between the ages of 10 and 17 have received unwanted online sexual solicitations and 1 in 4 admit having been exposed to unwanted online nudity.

Catching child pornographers is also an important goal of the new program. In Missouri alone law enforcement has identified more than 40,000 incidences where a computer has been used to transmit child pornography. “Child pornographers are vicious, evil people who sexually abuse children in the worst possible ways when they produce child pornography”, Senator Loudon stated. “Very young children, even infants have been victimized in unspeakable ways. 87% of those who possess child pornography have pictures of children between the ages of 6-12, 43% between the ages of 3-5 and 20% under age 3. It is horrible what happens to children when

child pornography is manufactured, and then they become victims again every time these images are traded.”

“To think that our children are unknowingly going into online chat rooms where sexual deviants hide behind the anonymity of the World Wide Web is frightening beyond all belief — as a parent, as a lawmaker and as a human being,” Loudon said. “I am thankful that the governor has signed this legislation, which will give local law enforcement officers tools to find these criminals and put them behind bars for a long time.”

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