



# MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 422  
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

**For Immediate Release:**  
**Dec. 4, 2006**

**Contact: Mike Reid**  
**(314) 895-0007; (573) 751-9763**

## Senator Loudon Pre-files Legislation to Protect Children at Home, School

---

### *Bills strengthen penalties and boost funding*

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. John Loudon, R-Chesterfield, today announced he has filed two bills for the upcoming session to protect children from child pornographers and school intruders.

Senate Bill 5 increases the maximum punishment for those convicted of possession of child pornography to 10 years in prison. Under current law, first-time offenders can receive a maximum of four years, and second offenses earn a maximum of seven years. The legislation also bans probation for those convicted of promoting child pornography, and when the pictures involve children under 14 it would require them to serve a minimum of three years of their sentence in prison. Currently, these offenders can be released from jail after serving as little as one day, or they can avoid prison altogether if they receive probation.

“Creating, distributing and possessing child pornography are inexcusable crimes that cannot be tolerated,” Loudon said. “Children are being victimized in the worst imaginable ways when the pornography is being produced. Those as young as infants have been raped and sodomized, and others have been tortured and forced to engage in bestiality. These disturbing practices warrant strict punishment.”

Also under SB 5, victims of child porn may pursue additional civil penalties against offenders. Victims will be able to sue those who use their pictures for up to 10 years after they turn 21 or within three years of when they discover the offense. They also will be entitled to at least \$150,000 in damages.

-MORE-

“In addition to the horrors victims are subjected to when the pornography is produced, distributing these images over media such as the Internet ensures these children will be victimized again and again for years after the original crime,” Loudon said. “Tougher penalties will provide a greater deterrent, and stronger civil damages will allow victims to seek redress against those who have harmed them.”

SB 5 is the latest of Loudon’s efforts to protect children from abuse. During the 2006 session, Loudon sponsored many of the provisions of Jessica’s Law, including one that created and funded Missouri’s cyber-predator detective grant program. Loudon has been continuing efforts to procure \$3 million for the program and a \$1.25 million increase for Missouri Children’s Advocacy Centers to hire forensic interviewers for children who have been sexually abused.

“It is vital that law enforcement officials have the tools they need to get tough on child predators,” Platte County Prosecuting Attorney Eric Zahnd said. “Last year’s passage of Jessica’s Law will help us do that, but now we need to increase penalties on child pornographers. I sincerely hope the Legislature will pass measures this session to make child pornographers spend serious time behind bars.”

Loudon also has pre-filed legislation instituting Safe Schools Part II to update the original Safe Schools Act and improve school security. SB 6 provides \$9 million to improve protections against intruders and students bringing guns and other weapons to school. School districts can use the money to hire resource officers, install security cameras and other protective devices, and pay for safety training and Internet-predator-protection training. In order to qualify for funding, schools will be required to have an intruder drill or lockdown procedure and conduct drills at least once a year.

“Safety in our schools is a top priority,” said Dr. John Oldani, executive director of Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis, an education consortium of 62 public school districts in Missouri and Illinois. “In order for students to achieve at the highest levels, we know that a safe environment is imperative.”

-END-