



# THE LOUDON TIMES

**Senator John Loudon**  
Senate District 7

**Capitol Building, Room 422**  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

**Column for Week of:**  
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**Contact: Nick Bengston**  
(573) 751-9763

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## **Reducing Costs for Taxpayers and Protecting Our Children**

This week, legislation that would provide more freedoms to contractors and reduce costs for state and local governments was introduced on the Senate floor. Senate Bill 849 prohibits governments from requiring contractors to enter into agreements with labor unions. However, that basic principle twice this week was challenged with filibusters, the process of unlimited debate aimed at stalling legislation. Lawmakers are now working to come to a suitable compromise. Nevertheless, this important legislation deserves consideration by lawmakers and should not have to be threatened with stalling tactics. No compromise is needed.

SB 849 would prohibit state and local governments from requiring potential contractors to enter into agreements with labor organizations in order to win construction contracts. Current law states that governments can require "project labor agreements," or PLAs, under which governments promise union working conditions for contractors in exchange for a pledge that workers will not strike or bargain for higher wages.

Union-only PLAs exclude open-shop contractors from bidding on construction projects. By reducing competition for these projects, costs are driven up at the taxpayer's expense. Open-shop contractors should not be left out in the cold, especially when your tax dollars are being used for public construction projects.

Not only do union-only PLAs drive up costs, they also discriminate against the four out of five construction workers in the United States who choose not to be represented by unions. Under union-only agreements, workers are required to join a union if they want to take part in a job. Workers should have a right to make their own decisions about whether or not to join a union, they should not be pressured by external forces.

This legislation is a win-win for Missouri taxpayers. We can save tax dollars and provide opportunities for a greater number of workers in our state. This common-sense bill deserves a vote on the Senate floor, and I will work to ensure it does not become watered down.



Senators spend long hours on the floor.

## **Protecting Our Children on the Internet**

Also this week, I introduced a plan to create a program to distribute grants to Internet-centered law-enforcement task forces and other law-enforcement agencies within the Missouri Department of Public Safety. Grant funds will help train and retain detectives and computer forensic specialists whose focus will be to investigate Internet sex crimes against children, including child enticement and possession or promotion of child pornography. I am currently working to procure \$3 to 5 million for the program.

Four out of five children between ages 10 and 17 have received unwarranted online solicitations. This alarming statistic shows how prevalent these Internet sexual predators really are. My legislation will take the fight to these sick individuals to keep our children safe.

If you have questions or comments about these issues or any other topic, please call my Capitol office at (573) 751-9763. Thank you for your support.

## **Quote of the Week**

“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset year telling our children and our children’s children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.”

Ronald Reagan