



# SENATOR MATT BARTLE

**District 8** – Capitol Building, Room 431 Jefferson City, MO 65101

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**Contact: Todd Scott**  
**(573) 751-1464 / (888) 711-9278**

## **Sen. Bartle Files Bill to Regulate Billboards for Smut Shops**

For years I have worked to counter the troubling expansion of the pornography industry into our communities. Increasingly obscene adult cabarets and the lurid advertising that crowds our public roads and highways have blighted Missouri's reputation as a family-friendly place to live in and visit. I responded in recent years with legislation implementing legal restrictions on adult businesses and cabarets and banning sexually oriented businesses from advertising within one mile of state highways. These measures easily passed the Legislature; however, the courts have overturned these new laws. Although I disagree with the court's rulings, I am refining the language of these measures and reintroducing the legislation in 2007 in order to deliver sensible restrictions that will pass constitutional scrutiny.

By way of background, a bill I sponsored in 2004 was passed into law by the Missouri General Assembly and signed by the governor. The bill was designed to keep adult businesses from advertising near Missouri's major thoroughfares. Under the measure, sexually oriented businesses could not advertise within one mile of Missouri highways. The law allowed these businesses to post just two signs, which could only display basic information, such as hours of operation, and warn minors that the premises were off limits.

Unfortunately, the measure was struck down by a federal appeals court this past summer. The court said the law's effect was overly broad, and in order to meet constitutional muster, it needs to be more narrowly targeted. Although I disagree with that ruling, I am pleased the court offered some guidance on what needed to be fixed with the law. This week I filed a new version of this measure and will be asking my colleagues in the Missouri Senate to join me in passing it into law. Similar language will also be filed by Rep. David Pearce, who handled the original bill in the Missouri House of Representatives three years ago.

The multi-billion-dollar pornography industry has shown that it will do all it can to exploit and corrupt Missouri communities, but I am not going to cease my efforts because of a few setbacks. The new legislation I am filing has been written to withstand inevitable legal challenges from the purveyors of porn. The majority of Missouri lawmakers and their constituents support common-sense restrictions on adult businesses, and we will continue to fight to rein in this destructive industry. The legislature reconvenes in early January, and I will immediately begin my efforts to see this legislation passed into law.

If you have comments or questions about any matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at [matt\\_bartle@senate.mo.gov](mailto:matt_bartle@senate.mo.gov) or by phone at (888) 711-9278.

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