



*Nothing is politically right
that is morally wrong.*

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JEFFERSON CITY

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is the firmest friend of truth.*

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 2006

Public Testifies in Support of Measure Urging Motorists to “Move Over”

Highway Patrol Troopers’ Wives Testify Before Senate Committee

JEFFERSON CITY, MO. – Senate President Pro Tem Michael R. Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, joined by Highway Patrol Troopers’ wives Mrs. Cheryl Floyd and Mrs. Jennifer Sampietro today asked the Senate Transportation Committee to advance a bill that encourages motorists to be more cautious on Missouri highways.

Senate Bill 872, sponsored by Gibbons, stiffens penalties for drivers who fail to move over and slow down when they approach emergency responders on Missouri's roads and highways. The bill increases the penalty from a Class B misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to a year in jail or a maximum fine of \$1,000.

Gibbons says he drafted the bill because four highway patrol officers have been killed while working traffic in the past four years.

“Highway patrolmen and emergency responders work everyday to save lives. We need to do what we can to save theirs,” Gibbons said. “We want drivers to help keep officers and emergency responders safe and alive by slowing down, staying alert, and moving over when they see emergency lights on the road. But when drivers are careless and ignore the law by speeding through emergency scenes, they put lives in danger and should face a tougher penalty.”

Since 2002, four members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol have been killed while working traffic. All four of the officers were struck by vehicles while performing traffic duties with their emergency lights on.

Trooper Donald K. “Kevin” Floyd was struck and killed on Sept. 22, 2005, by a pickup truck while working a traffic violation. Corporal John A. “Jay” Sampietro, Jr. was struck and killed while directing traffic around an earlier crash on I-44 in Webster County on August 17, 2005.

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GIBBONS MOVE OVER

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Both their wives, Mrs. Cheryl Floyd and Mrs. Jennifer Sampietro, gave emotional testimony before the committee in favor of the legislation to prevent other highway patrolmen and emergency responders from dieing in the line of duty from inattentive drivers.

“My husband, and Cheryl’s husband, unfortunately they’re not going to be the last ones. It’s just a matter of time,” Mrs. Sampietro said. “We need to make laws that are defined.”

Two other separate bills were also heard before the committee. The first, SB 941, sponsored by Sen. Dan Clemens, R-Marshfield, designates a portion of Interstate-44 in Greene County as the "Corporal John A. "Jay" Sampietro, Jr. MO State Highway Patrol Memorial Highway." The second, SB 956, sponsored by Sen. Chuck Purgason, R-Caulfield, designates a portion of U.S. Highway 60 in Texas County as the "Trooper D. Kevin Floyd Memorial Highway."

“I salute the sacrifices made by our Missouri troopers and hope this small act honors their memory,” Clemens said. “I encourage the public to listen to the message of the troopers' wives who urge us all to respect our public safety officials as they do their jobs.”

All three bills must be approved by the Senate committee before moving to the floor for debate by the entire chamber.

***Audio clips in .mp3 format of Sen. Gibbons’ testimony and Ms. Floyd’s and Ms. Sampietro’s testimonies can be found on the Missouri Senate Newsroom Audio/Video webpage under “Daily Cuts”: <http://www.senate.state.mo.us/05info/press-room/radio.html>



Trooper Donald K. "Kevin" Floyd was killed in the line of duty Sept. 22, 2005.



Corporal John A. "Jay" Sampietro, Jr. was killed in the line of duty August 17, 2005.

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