



Gibbons Capitol Report
October 26, 2006

Protecting our Children

The Highway Patrol unveiled Missouri's new sex offender registry website and toll-free number this week, just in time for Halloween. Parents can use the new tools to help keep their children safe on their Halloween 'Trick-or-Treat' routes Tuesday night. The updated website and toll free number were part of a comprehensive bill we passed this year to protect children from sexual predators. The bill, known in other states as Jessica's Law, set a 30 year minimum mandatory sentence for violent pedophiles. But we also focused on prevention to keep our children safe in the first place.

Mapping Your Neighborhood

The Missouri State Highway Patrol online sexual offender registry has versatile search tools. Rather than only searching by name, parents can log on and search by zip code or addresses. The mapping tool can help parents identify sexual offenders who live or work in the area. It comes in especially handy to help identify the homes your children should avoid while collected candy on Halloween night.

Photos and Other Details

The new law also allowed more information to be posted about sexual offenders including updated photographs, aliases and the crime they committed and the age of their victim. It also includes their date of birth, physical descriptions including things such as tattoos, their home, work and school addresses as well as what kind of vehicle they drive. You can also find out the amount of time they served, what confinement restrictions they currently have, and if they are in compliance with registration requirements.

Toll Free Number

I'm glad we can use technology to give parents access to information that will help keep their children safe. Those who do not have Internet access can call the new toll free number 1-888-SOR-MSHP (1-888-767-6747). Missouri State Highway Patrol employees are on hand to answer your calls and provide information to you Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

This weekend I encourage parents to take some time to familiarize themselves with the new sex offender registry website. You can use the mapping tools and photographs on the state registry to make sure your children don't inadvertently approach the home of a convicted sex offender asking for candy on Halloween night. If someone sexually harms

a child, we will lock the door and throw away the key. But we must all work together using every prevention tool we have available to us to protect our children.

The Missouri State Highway Patrol Sex Offender Registry can be found on-line at:
www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/PatrolDivisions/CRID/SOR/SORPage.html