



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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Public Safety Budget Includes Landmark \$1.25 Million to Stop Sexual Predators

Senate Adopts Loudon's Priority Budget Request

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. John Loudon, R-Chesterfield, is pleased to announce the State Senate has approved \$1.25 million for a grant program to hire, equip and train Internet detectives and computer forensic personnel to go after Internet predators and child pornographers.

“These are the worst of the worst,” said Loudon. “Most people now recognize the danger posed to children by Internet predators. Many, however, have underestimated how vicious, depraved and cruel child pornography is. Children as young as infants have been raped or sodomized. Some have been tortured or forced to engage in bestiality. And there is a high correlation, as high as 80%, between people who possess child pornography and child molestation itself.”

“I am grateful to the Senate for approving these funds. Hiring more detectives to go after predators and child pornographers will help stop children from being further victimized, prevent new victims, save families much anguish and even save lives.”

There have been more than 61,000 cases of Internet child pornography in Missouri. Glendale Police Lt. Joe Laramie, Missouri's ICAC coordinator has cited a survey that found 87 percent of those who possess child pornography have pictures of children between the ages of 6 and 12, 43 percent between ages 3 and 5 and 20 percent under age 3.

Under the bill, the money from the grant program goes from just \$250,000 this year to more than \$1.25 million for the coming fiscal year. Multi-jurisdictional law enforcement units could get the grant

monies to hire and train online detectives and computer forensic experts. Law enforcement would then have the people and the tools to set up operations, such as stings, to catch these suspected criminals.

“We, as lawmakers, have the responsibility to protect the youngest citizens of this state from those who would troll the Internet hoping to snare our children and receive some perverse gratification from their exploitation,” said Loudon. “I hope anyone who even thinks about committing this kind of crime in Missouri will know that we are serious and have the means and the will to stop them.”

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