



# THE STOUFFER REPORT

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Senate District 21

**Capitol Building, Room 332**  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

**For the Week of:**  
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## **Amber Alert Contributes to “Miracle in Missouri”**

Miracles Do Happen! Among all the major news stories of recent memory, perhaps none is more inspiring than the Miracle in Missouri, which took place when Ben Ownby and Shawn Hornbeck were discovered in Kirkwood after being kidnapped.

Ben Ownby’s disappearance gripped Missourians and led many residents on the east side of the state to leave their homes in search of the boy. His rescue alongside Hornbeck, who had been missing for more than four years, astonished and overjoyed the entire nation. This story emphasizes not just the spirit of these two boys, but also the need to continue supporting Missouri Amber Alert, which helped rescue them from a troubled individual.

Missouri Amber Alert was crucial in spreading information leading to the rescue of Ownby and Hornbeck. Law enforcers and media outlets gave repeated descriptions of the white pickup used to kidnap Ownby, which ultimately led investigators to their captor.

The program, established in 2003 through Senate legislation, is a public-private partnership that complements and enhances local abduction-alert plans by providing widespread communications resources. Missouri Amber Alert utilizes radio and television broadcasts, electronic signs, the Missouri Uniform Law Enforcement System, and the communication capabilities of private entities that interact with the general public. The system also has been designed to provide local-alert capabilities in areas without such capacities, although the development of local plans is preferred.

Missouri Amber Alert was designed in cooperation with the Missouri Police Chiefs Association, the Missouri Sheriffs’ Association, the Missouri Broadcasters Association, and the Missouri State Highway Patrol. In the future, the program will expand to provide public alerts related to other types of criminal activity, homeland security and health emergencies. Missouri Amber Alert is free to local law enforcement, and participation is strictly voluntary.

I encourage private entities with the ability to relay urgent messages to sign up with the program by contacting the Missouri Department of Public Safety or going online to [www.dps.mo.gov/home/AmberAlert.htm](http://www.dps.mo.gov/home/AmberAlert.htm). Law enforcement officials can also visit the site to download the form used to issue an abduction alert. The form includes all necessary instructions.

Amber Alert is a valuable program with proven results, and every entity able to utilize the program should do so. You just might save a life.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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