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MISSOURI SENATE

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Sen. Crowell Files Legislation to Make Missouri Roads Safer

JEFFERSON CITY—Sen. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau, this week filed a bill to crack down on driving while under the influence of drugs.

Senate Bill 216 creates the crime of driving with any controlled substance in the body. Those who have a valid prescription for the controlled substance found in their bloodstream would not be in violation of the law.

“A person’s ability to drive can be impaired by controlled substances, just as it is impaired by the consumption of alcohol,” Crowell said. “No level of illicit drug use can be guaranteed safe in combination with driving a vehicle, and because of the possible lethal consequences, that sort of irresponsible behavior should not be tolerated.”

Sixteen other states, including Illinois, have drugged-driving laws in some form. Under Crowell’s bill, the new crime would be considered a Class B misdemeanor for a first offense, punishable by up to six months in jail and a maximum fine of \$500.

“The effects of drugs on individuals vary greatly, but because the manufacturing and distribution of illicit drugs are unregulated, the unpredictable and unintended consequences of driving drugged are worth preventing,” Crowell said. “Taking drugs without a prescription is illegal, and driving with the drugs in the system is unsafe. It is my hope that with this legislation, we can deter this type of behavior, on and off the roads, which will surely save lives.”

The First Regular Session of the 94th General Assembly convened today, Jan. 3, 2006.

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