



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**For Immediate Release:
March 16, 2007**

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Sen. Crowell's Constitutional Child Safety Amendment Clears Senate

Voters to Have Say In Sex Offender Registry Expansion Measure

JEFFERSON CITY — Constitutional language drafted and advanced by Sen. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau, expanding the reach of the state's sex offender registry in order to enhance public safety cleared the Senate this week and is now in the state House for similar consideration.

Senate Joint Resolution 9 would amend Missouri's constitution to require those convicted of sex offenses before 1995 to register with the state-maintained offenders list. The measure comes on the heels of a recent state high court ruling establishing that the registry applies only to those convicted of sex offenses in or after 1995 – the year “Megan's Law,” requiring convicted sex offenders to register their names and addresses with local sheriff's departments, was enacted.

“As a matter of functional practicality, the state's constitution prohibits retroactively applying newly-enacted laws,” said Sen. Crowell, who chairs the Senate's general laws committee. “But with respect to the sex offender registry, an exception to this principle is clearly in order to remove the unintended cloak of anonymity that pre-1995 sex offenders are now undeservedly wearing.”

Senator Crowell noted the amendment specifically limits the retroactive exception to the sex offender registry. On clearing the House, the measure would go before voters next year, as is required of all proposed changes to the constitution.

“This will be an opportunity for residents to greatly expand the available information on who might be living in their communities, and to eliminate a loophole now luring offenders to Missouri from other states,” Sen Crowell said. “In making this minor change, Missouri will make major gains in parental peace-of-mind and child safety protection.”

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