



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

Delbert Scott
28th Senate District

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 416
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

**A Weekly Column for the
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**Contact: Debbie Poire
(573) 751-8793**

Preserving the Right of Self Defense

JEFFERSON CITY – A Senate committee heard testimony on a couple of bills this week which would allow property owners to protect their homes and families from intruders. The so-called “Castle Doctrine” is a well-established legal concept that’s being adopted in a growing number of states.

Under current state law, if someone unlawfully enters your home or tries to steal your car, you are required to first retreat instead of fighting back. Home and property owners have to establish that an intruder means to do them bodily harm before they can use appropriate force against them.

A version of the “Castle Doctrine” approved by the Missouri House last year and being considered by both chambers this year would make three major changes to our current law. First, it creates the presumption that criminals who unlawfully enter and remain in your home intend to do harm to you and your family. Second, the legislation removes the requirement that property owners retreat from their home, car or property when someone has entered unlawfully. Finally, the bill states that a person who uses justified force against an invader is immune from criminal prosecution or civil action.

One of the main purposes of government is to protect the rights of property and to preserve life and liberty. The legislation being advanced this year returns to the citizens their right to protect life, limb and property while putting criminals on notice that their crimes are not acceptable in a civil society.

Your home is your castle, and you have a right to be safe inside its walls.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.state.mo.us.

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.