



# MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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## Sen. Loudon Encourages Adoption of Boost to Cyber Crime Grant Funding

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### *Urges Lawmakers to Endorse House-backed \$2.25 Million Appropriation*

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. John Loudon (R-Chesterfield) today expressed strong support for the appropriation of \$2.25 million for the state’s Internet Cyber Crime Grant (ICCG) program, which awards grants to the state’s regional cyber crime-fighting units for added staff and equipment to help rid the Internet of predators and pornography traffickers. The ICCG program was initiated by legislation advanced by Sen. Loudon in 2006 with an initial funding level of \$250,000. Last year, in working with House Budget Chairman Rep. Allen Ictet (R-Wildwood), Sen. Loudon was able to have a \$1 million increase infused into the program. Increases proposed for the upcoming budget year by the governor, Rep. Ictet, and Rep. Danielle Moore (R-Fulton) came to another \$1 million, placing the House-backed target at \$2.25 million for FY ‘09. Senate budget leaders are currently taking a more conservative approach, proposing a total appropriation of \$1 million.

“Every day since its launch we’ve had evidence of the cyber crime grant program working,” Sen. Loudon said. “Just this week, Maryland Heights Police Department cyber detectives funded through the grant program apprehended a school teacher who teaches in a parochial school in St. Charles. He was arrested for attempting to sexually entice a person he thought was a 14-year-old girl. With greater funding comes greater opportunity to track down cyber criminals and bring them to justice. And fewer criminals trolling the Internet means fewer children preyed upon.”

The program funding level is one of many ongoing negotiations on the 2009 budget taking place between House and Senate conference committee members. Conferees discussed the cyber crimes grant appropriation this morning and have left the matter open to further negotiation.

“I’m extremely hopeful that the conferees will agree to bring the uppermost funding figure back to the full House and Senate,” Sen. Loudon said. “Funding discussions for all state programs and services are important ones. But in an overall budget nearing \$23 billion, I find it very easy to justify the expenditure of less than \$2.3 million to protect Missouri’s children and I would like to say a majority of my House and Senate colleagues feel the same way.”

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