



# MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

John Loudon  
7<sup>th</sup> Senate District

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**For Immediate Release**  
**July 3, 2008**

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## STATEMENT

### By Sen. John Loudon on Vermont Girl's Death and Alleged Sexual Abuse and Child Sex-Ring Initiation

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JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. John Loudon, R-Chesterfield, today responded to the horrible tragedy discovered this week in Vermont, where the remains of a 12-year-old girl missing for a week were found and led to the arrest of an uncle and stepfather on separate charges of sexual assault. According to published reports, the girl's uncle, Michael Jacques, whom the girl was last seen with, was arrested on a charge of sexually assaulting another child, also a relative of Jacques. The young relative reportedly told police in an affidavit that she had been victimized by Jacques and the victim's former stepfather, Ray Gagnon, and that both girls were being initiated into a child sex ring. Police say the uncle will also be charged in federal court with kidnapping. The case also involves destroying child pornography evidence that was allegedly kept on the former stepfather's computer.

“This is a terrible tragedy that should never have happened. Now more than ever we need to redouble our efforts to protect children. In Missouri, we are putting tools in place to break up that dark world.

“We have provided \$1.5 million this year to create and beef up existing internet cyber crimes task forces across the state. With the Governor recently signing comprehensive child-protection legislation that I sponsored in Senate Bill 714, we will double the money for law enforcement to go after Internet predators and child pornographers to \$3 million. We have also provided much stronger penalties for those who molest children or distribute or possess child pornography.

“These tragedies are heart wrenching and terrible, creating wounds that can never heal. We must do everything we can to prevent these evil crimes and ensure swift justice for those who commit them.”

– Sen. John Loudon

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