



MISSOURI SENATE

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7th Senate District

**For Immediate Release:
Oct. 14, 2008**

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Senator John Loudon Urges Legal Opinion on Sunshine Law

*Question to Attorney General's Office Considers Written
Communication Between Members of Governmental Groups*

ST. LOUIS COUNTY — Senator John Loudon, R-Chesterfield, renewed his call today for a formal legal opinion by the Missouri Attorney General's office on whether official written communication between state legislators and other state governmental officials and agencies is considered public record under Missouri's Sunshine Law.

Senator Loudon issued an initial request to the Attorney General's office in April, and a revised request again in August, asking Attorney General Jay Nixon to clear up confusion as to whether the written communication developed or written by individuals or members within governmental groups falls into the scope of the definition of public record as outlined in Chapter 610, RSMo, commonly known as the "Sunshine Law." The Missouri Press Association also made an inquiry to the Attorney General's office on the matter in July.

"We need the Attorney General to hurry up and make a definitive decision on this matter because public office holders are confused and we need to know the guidelines that are in force. The question is also of significant importance to both the public and the media, who also demand an answer, especially during today's political climate when lawsuits of this kind are springing up all over the place.

"A few years ago, the Attorney General issued an opinion that appeared to conclude the Sunshine Law does apply to individual members of a governmental body, but the interpretation was vague, so the matter is still very much in question. It would be in everyone's best interest for our Attorney General to issue a succinct opinion promptly and clarify this matter once and for all."

-Senator John Loudon

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