



## MISSOURI SENATE

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A Column for the Week  
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# DNA Profiling for Juvenile Offenders

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JEFFERSON CITY — DNA profiling has been a success in Missouri. Nearly three years ago, the state's DNA Profiling System was expanded to take DNA samples of all convicted felony offenders in the state. That move has dramatically increased the number of cold cases law enforcement has been able to solve with hundreds of lawbreakers finally being brought to justice, including many homicide and rape cases. Armed with this new tool, our police officers and sheriff's departments are getting hits on new rape or homicide cases each week. Now, it's time we expanded the pool of those under this successful system.

I have pre-filed [Senate Bill 754](#), which would further expand the program to include the most heinous juvenile and misdemeanor crimes and make other needed revisions to criminal law. Under my proposal, juveniles convicted of offenses that would be a felony for an adult would have to submit a biological sample for DNA profiling analysis. Those who have committed a Class A misdemeanor would also have the same sample collected. If they refuse to submit a DNA sample or if someone tampered with a DNA sample, they would also be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

We know that many times the same individuals are committing crimes over and over again. This will give our law enforcement agencies a new tool to catch these offenders when they are committing lower-level crimes. We know we'll be able to match up some of them with more hard-core crimes.

Keeping our communities safe is hard work, and as a lawyer, I can tell you that the state's criminal law is in constant need of revision to keep current with the new technologies. Our law enforcement officers deserve to have every means they can to help keep all of safe. I believe DNA profiling is a proven method to do just that, and the expansion of this successful program to include juvenile offenders is a common-sense approach. I will be working to get [SB 754](#) passed this session, and I encourage my colleagues in the Legislature to support this measure.

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*Senator Robert Mayer represents the people of Wayne, Ripley, Butler, Stoddard, New Madrid, Pemiscot and Dunklin counties in the Missouri Senate.*