

# State Senator Robert Mayer The Mayer Memo

Senator Robert Mayer - Serving Butler, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Stoddard & Wayne Counties



[Website](#) | [Contact Me](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

## Protecting Missouri's Children from Predators

JEFFERSON CITY — Recently the Senate passed sweeping legislation that will help curb sex crimes targeted at those we need to protect most — our children. [Senate Bill 714](#) is a wide-ranging measure that expands the state's sex offender registry, increases the severity of charges for sex crimes and attempted sex crimes against children, and allocates additional funds to the state's incredibly successful Internet Cyber Crimes Grant (ICCG) program. The bill is now in the House for similar consideration.

The wide-ranging sex crimes bill contains a number of carefully thought-out provisions — all intended to reinforce our state's steadfast commitment to providing the most encompassing protection possible for our children. By expanding the state's sex offender registry to include more online identifying information relating to any registered sex offender, as well as the names of juveniles found guilty of certain sexual crimes, we can equip law enforcement with a broader database to help them search for suspects.

Senate Bill 714 also requires any person whose name is on a sex offender registry in another state who attends public or private school in Missouri for more than seven days to provide information to the registry. The initiative adds the crime of conspiring to commit certain sexual offenses to the list of crimes for which a person must register as well. The penalty for failing to register as a sex offender would also be increased if the legislation is enacted.

Additional provisions in the measure shorten the amount of time convicted sex

offenders have to register with law enforcement officials, ban sex offenders from participating in all Halloween festivities relating to children, and expand the list of violators who must stay at least 500 feet away from schools or child-care facilities to include offenders registered in other states, countries and jurisdictions. Another major component of the bill increases the penalty for attempted sexual misconduct with a child to a Class D felony — the same penalty for actually committing the act itself. Likewise, anyone who attempts to supply pornographic materials to a minor would be charged with the same penalty (a Class A misdemeanor) as those who actually provide the materials. The measure also strengthens the penalty for possession of child pornography.

Perhaps just as important as adding to the current child pornography law is the overturning of a state court of appeals decision that allows defendants and attorneys involved in child pornography cases to retrieve evidence following court cases. If enacted, SB 714 would require them to view evidence at approved state or governmental facilities and avoid redistribution of the pornographic images.

Finally, the legislation creates a new fund for the purpose of investigating cyber crimes, which would provide \$3 million per year to the existing ICCG grant program. The ICCG program has found success in providing funding for local law enforcement and task forces to hire cyber detectives and computer forensic experts to go after Internet predators and child pornographers. Since the program's inception, arrests of cyber predators quadrupled from 2006 to 2007, from 26 to 105 cases. Many law enforcement personnel have reported that now that they are armed with the proper funding, solving cyber crimes has become much easier.

Keeping Missouri a safe place for kids to live and play is one of my top priorities. And if by doing so, we make it one of the worst places for sexual offenders to be, even better. It's my hope that the Missouri House will recognize the importance of this legislation and give its approval so we can better protect our children from those who seek to harm them.

**Capitol Office**  
State Capitol Building  
Room 331  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

**Website:**  
<http://www.senate.mo.gov/mayer>

**Phone Number:**  
573.751.3859  
**Fax:**  
573.526.1384