



MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

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For Immediate Release:
September 18, 2008

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Sen. Jason Crowell Announces Nomination of Two Southeast Missourians to Autism Panel

JEFFERSON CITY– Sen. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau, will serve as the Senate sponsor for Connie L. Hébert of Cape Girardeau and Dr. David Crowe of Cape Girardeau, who both were appointed by the governor today (9/18) to serve on the newly-created Missouri Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The Missouri Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders was created through the passage of Senate Bill 768 during the 2008 legislative session. The commission is charged with developing a comprehensive statewide plan for an integrated system of training, treatment, and services for individuals of all ages with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The commission will issue preliminary recommendations by July 1, 2009.

Connie Hébert is the interim director of the Southeast Missouri State University Autism Center for Diagnosis and Treatment. Her background includes a master's degree in special education from Pennsylvania State University and professional experience as a special education consultant.

“Connie has an extensive background in special education, particularly in autism spectrum disorders,” said Sen. Crowell. “I am confident she will be an important contributor in Missouri’s fight to improve autistic services.”

Dr. David Crowe is the founder of the Tailor Institute in Cape Girardeau — a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of those with high-functioning autism. He is also the father of Taylor Crowe, who was diagnosed with autism at age 4 and is now an adult autism advocate.

“David knows first-hand the way parents of those with autism can feel and the importance of available treatment opportunities,” said Sen. Crowell. “His professional and personal experience will be an asset to the panel.”

The members of many state commissions and boards are appointed by the governor. Gubernatorial appointees then work with their state senator, who sponsors them in the confirmation process. Senator Crowell, long a champion of autism research, will advance the autism panel nominations during the upcoming session in January. The confirmation process begins before the Senate’s appointments committee and concludes with a consenting vote by the full Senate.

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