



Senator Matt Bartle – Serving Jackson County

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## Crime Bill Signed into Law

As of last week, the Show-Me State is tougher on criminals and safer for Missouri families. [House Bill 62](#), which I handled in the Senate, officially became law on July 9 after receiving the governor's signature. Most of its provisions become effective on August 28.

The new law has several provisions that maintain our state's commitment to being tough on crime. It also makes many common-sense changes to the law that will help protect Missouri families. Some of these provisions include:

- Creating penalties for owners of dogs that cause injury and creating an absolute defense against civil liability or prosecution for killing or injuring certain threatening dogs.
- Prohibiting drivers 21 and younger from texting.
- Making Missouri streams more family-friendly by prohibiting certain activities on the state's minor rivers including possessing or using beer bongs or other devices designed for the rapid consumption of alcohol and banning large volume alcohol containers, such as kegs, and certain types of Styrofoam coolers that often break apart and pollute our scenic waterways.
- Strengthening the penalty for cattle rustling by requiring any person who steals livestock worth more than \$3,000 and who has pleaded guilty to the same offense before to serve at least 80 percent of the sentence before being eligible for probation or parole.
- Prohibiting the use of false or misleading diplomas for admission to higher education institutions or in connection with employment.

- Cracking down on websites such as Craigslist by creating the crime of promoting online sexual solicitation for allowing a web-based classified service to be used to post advertisements promoting prostitution, enticing a child to engage in sexual conduct, or promoting sexual trafficking of a child.
- Requiring entire interrogations of individuals suspected of committing serious crimes to be recorded.

Also signed by the governor last week was [HB 152](#), another bill I handled in the Senate. This measure expands upon a landmark crime-fighting bill that I worked to pass five years ago, which required the state's DNA registry system to include all convicted felons. The difference this has made for law enforcement officers who are trying to solve crimes cannot be overstated—thousands of solved cases are attributed to DNA law expansions across the country. House Bill 152 takes it a step further by requiring any person who is age 17 or older and who is arrested for certain violent felonies, sexual offenses and burglary to provide a DNA sample for the database, making it an even more effective tool for law enforcement.

Sadistic sexual predators who terrorize our children will also receive the strictest penalty the state is able to provide after the governor signed [SB 36](#). Prior to this bill, the penalty for forcible rape or sodomy of a child under the age of 12 was life in prison without eligibility for probation or parole until the person has served at least 30 years of the sentence. The new law will allow prosecutors to seek a penalty of life in prison without ever being eligible for probation, parole or conditional release in certain cases.

I am pleased with the way criminal laws in Missouri were strengthened this year. The changes made this session will have positive effects for years to come.

If you have any comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at [matt\\_bartle@senate.mo.gov](mailto:matt_bartle@senate.mo.gov) or by phone at (888) 711-9278. My web address is <http://www.senate.mo.gov/bartle>.

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