



LOUISIANA SENATE

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SENATOR JP MORRELL DRAFTS PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE SAFER COMMUNITIES

As part of his commitment to promote criminal justice reform and improve public safety in Louisiana, District 3 State Senator JP Morrell (D - New Orleans) has drafted two bills to be introduced in the 2012 Regular Legislative Session. Both measures are meant to strengthen public safety laws and protect the people of the state, especially children.

Senate Bill 4 makes it a crime to fail to report the sexual abuse of a child to law enforcement. Sen. Morrell cites the recent incidents that took place at Pennsylvania State University as an example of why such a measure is necessary.

"This is an extremely important bill for the safety of our children. The sexual assault of a child is the most heinous act an individual can commit. Equally heinous is when someone witnesses this crime and fails to report it to law enforcement. The Sandusky Trial in Pennsylvania has brought this problem to light in that there were apparently several people that knew, or should have known, this was taking place but did nothing," said Sen. Morrell. "This bill I present goes beyond the Sandusky incident. In the State of Louisiana, I am proposing that we criminalize ANY failure to report a child sex crime regardless of the circumstances. Whether it is a neighbor, relative or coworker, if you don't report an attack on a child - you go to jail."

Under Senate Bill 3, the killing of a person while the offender is engaged in the unlawful sale or distribution of heroin, methamphetamine, or "crack" cocaine will be considered second degree murder.

"The war on drugs is ongoing and drug trafficking is the nexus of a lot of the misery we experience in regard to violent crime. It is hard to argue that selling crack, heroin or meth will not result in someone's death. What I am proposing with this law is that we up the ante on all the drug dealers throughout this state. If you get mixed up in a fatal drug deal - and someone's blood is on your hands - you will be tried as a second degree murderer. It's that simple," said Sen. Morrell.

The two measures have been prefiled and can be found at www.legis.state.la.us.

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