

## MySpace Suicide Case Leads To Tougher Laws

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By Michael Todd  
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After the troubling suicide committed by a Missouri teenager due to an Internet related incident, state lawmakers voted and gave final approval yesterday to a bill which will deal with cyber-harassment.

The bill is expected to cover several aspects of the new wave of technology, identifying as illegal the harassment from computers, text messages and many other electronic devices, besides the well known written and telephone communications.

Republican Governor Matt Blunt, who will soon sign the final version of the bill, issued a statement saying that the social networking sites and technology have provided criminals with a whole new set of weapons against their victims and the new protections and penalties are highly needed in order to ensure a safer environment for everyone.

Lori Drew, 49, was indicted on Thursday by a Los Angeles grand jury for her alleged role in an online hoax that led to the suicide of her 13-year-old neighbour Megan Meier of Dardenne Prairie back in 2006.

Lori Drew was accused of creating a fake MySpace identity under the name of "Josh Evans", a 16 year old boy, making friends and later harassing Megan not long before she committed suicide.

On October 15, 2006, the so-called 16 year-old teenager Josh Evans turned against Megan, sending her negative comments, and ending with a harsh message: "The world would be a better place without you." According to a police report, Megan later hanged herself in her bedroom closet.

Under the current state laws, the maximum possible penalty that Lori Drew can receive is of twenty years in prison.