



# Missouri House of Representatives

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## **Rep. Bob Dixon Files Bill to Eliminate Missouri Jim Crow Law**

**JEFFERSON CITY** – The final trace of the infamous Jim Crow laws would be wiped from the books under a new measure introduced by Rep. Bob Dixon, R-Springfield. The bill would clean up old language that referred to a segregated state training school that is no longer operational.

“I’m honored to drive the final nail in Jim Crow’s coffin in Missouri,” said Rep. Dixon. “I expect quick passage of this legislation, and will continue to work to bring people together in our community and state.”

By statute, Missouri had allowed for segregation reform schools since 1947. The State Training School for Negro Girls was opened in Tipton in 1916 and was in operation until the mid 1950s. Although the school has been out of operation for nearly a century, according to the February 2004 report, “the law recognizes that the authority of the county superintendent over the defunct institution still exists.”

Although defunct, the antiquated statute reminds us of an era when states enacted legislation to maintain the segregation of white and black schools. Ironically, the fiftieth anniversary of *Brown vs. Board of Education* is May 17 of this year. Section 202.900 of the Missouri Revised Statutes grants county superintendents of institutions for public welfare the authority to oversee and supervise parolees from “the Missouri Training School for Boys and to girls on parole from the State Training School for Girls or from the State Training School for *Negro* Girls . . .” The entire subsection will be eliminated by this measure.

The bill, filed as House Bill 1631, was read the first time Thursday. A hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, and a vote may follow.

The term Jim Crow is believed to have originated around 1830 when a white, minstrel show performer, Thomas "Daddy" Rice, blackened his face with charcoal paste or burnt cork and danced a ridiculous jig while singing the lyrics to the song, "Jump Jim Crow." Rice created this character after seeing (while traveling in the South) a crippled, elderly black man (or some say a young black boy) dancing and singing a song ending with these chorus words: "*Weel about and turn about and do jis so, Eb'ry time I weel about I jump Jim Crow.*"