

THE PROBLEM

Most persons on public registries are not a danger to the public. They include teen sexting¹, consensual relations between young people², and people who have been living offense free lives for years. The vast majority of registrants will never re-offend sexually, and have long since completed their sentences, and yet they are branded for life.³

Public sex offender registries don't work. Studies keep coming in showing no improvement to public safety, and possibly even show an actual decrease.⁴ That's a huge problem for prevention and is a misappropriation of tax payer funds.

Sex offender registries create a largely fictional "boogeyman." Fictional, because false information about high re-offense rates, multiple victims and inability to change are repeated endlessly but not supported by scientific research.⁵

“States should eliminate public access to online registries of sex offenders as a form of community notification.”

~Human Rights Watch

THE DAMAGE

Tax dollars are wasted. Because a large majority of registrants will never reoffend and do not need tracking, our tax dollars are being squandered.⁶

Law Enforcement cannot effectively monitor high-risk registrants because the registry is bloated. Instead their time and resources are wasted tracking so many low-to-no-risk registrants.

Published registries trigger fear, hatred, and hysteria. The misinformation and stigmatization used to justify harsh sexual offense laws create unnecessary panic and distrust in communities.

Sex offender registries provide a hit list for hate groups. Uncountable registered citizens and their families (including children) are being harassed and targeted for vandalism, violent assaults, false charges and murder.⁷ When anyone in the home is on the registry, all persons in the home are effectively registered, too.⁸

Anyone can end up on a registry. We started with the "worst of the worst" sex offenders. Now it's all manner of sex-related crimes with many states adding registries for other types of offenders.⁹ Who will be on the next hit list?

*Most new sexual offenses
are by first-time offenders.¹⁰
Promote Prevention!*

A BETTER Way

Let Law Enforcement exclusively monitor former sex offenders using the National Crime Information Center's existing list.

Remove community notification and internet listings that routinely publish names of persons convicted of any sexual offense, reducing risk of vigilantism.

Embrace restorative justice programs, such as Circles of Support and Accountability, which have been unequivocally proven successful even for persons deemed at the highest risk to re-offend sexually.¹¹

Focus on prevention. Nearly 90% of sexual offenses take place in a home, with 50% of these committed by a family member and the remainder by other trusted individuals.¹² Focusing on prevention will break the vicious cycle of sexual abuse before it happens.

Promote rehabilitation. Registrants are often unable to find employment or housing, throwing them and their families into poverty and undermining stability.¹² An approach that promotes common sense and responsibility can reduce re-offense and taxpayer burden.

“Choosing to set apart any group of people and deny them civil, constitutional and human rights threatens the rights of every person in the nation.”

~RSOL



THE REWARDS ARE MANY

The sexually offended can come forward safely, knowing that neither their own nor their families' identities will be published along with the identities of the registrants.¹⁴

Our communities will be safer. Law enforcement, unencumbered by bloated registries, can protect the public from the truly dangerous offenders and focus on prevention.

Our homes will become safer and relationships healthier through preventive education and intervention, reducing future sexual offenses.

Our tax dollars will be well spent on truly successful programs that promote prevention, rehabilitate those in need of rehabilitation, and offer restoration to victims as well as former sex offenders seeking to return to our communities as responsible citizens.

“America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.”

~Abraham Lincoln

REFERENCES:

- ¹ Stephanie Gaylord Forbes, *Sex, Cells, and SORNA: Applying Sex Offender Registration Laws to Sexting Cases*, 52 *William & Mary L. Rev.* 1717, 1725-27 (2011.)
- ² See class action *Whitaker v Perdue*, No 4:06-cv-140-CC 2006 WL 2378219 (N.D. Ga. July 7, 2006) for examples.
- ³ Bob Vasquez, Sean Madden & Jeffery Walker, *The Influence of Sex Offender Registration and Notification Laws in the United States: A Time-Series Analysis*, 54 *Crime & Delinquency* 175, 188 (2008.)
- ⁴ Jill Letourneau, et al., *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Sex Offender Registration and Notification Policies for Reducing Sexual Violence Against Women* 4, 9-10 (2010.)
- ⁵ Letourneau, et al, 7.
- ⁶ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Recidivism of Sex Offenders Released from Prison in 1994* (2003.)
- ⁷ Human Rights Watch, *No Easy Answers: Sex Offender Laws in the US* 9, 18 (2007.)
- ⁸ Jill Levenson & Richard Tewksury, *Collateral Damage: Family Members of Registered Sex Offenders*, *Am. J of Crim. Justice* 54, 62-64 (2009.)
- ⁹ Brian Loendorf, *Methamphetamine Offender Registries: Are the Rights of Non-Dangerous Offenders Cooked?* 17 *Kan. J.L. & Pub. Pol'y* 542 (2008.)
- ¹⁰ Barb Pacholik, *Calling a sex offender 'friend' - Circles of Support & Accountability helps reintegrate and reduce risks* *Leader-Post*, G1, Sat Oct 19 (2013)
- ¹¹ *Child Sexual Abuse: What Parents Should Know*, *Am. Psych. Assoc.* (July 10, 2012.)
- ¹² Human Rights Watch, 9-10.
- ¹³ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Recidivism of Sex Offenders Released From Prison In 1994*, Table 36 (2003.)
- ¹⁴ *Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA): Barriers to Timely Compliance by States...* 111th Cong. 91-92 (2009.)

RSOL seeks effective, fact-based sexual offense laws and policies which promote public safety, safeguard civil liberties, honor human dignity, and offer holistic prevention, healing, and restoration.

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PROJECT L.E.O.

Public Sex Offender Registries DON'T WORK!

Support Safer Communities through

Law
Enforcement
Only
Registration!

Published sex offender registries are destroying trust in our families and communities, promoting hysteria, and are largely ineffective at preventing sexual abuse.

ReformSexOffenderLaws.org

