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Facebook's SO discrimination policy under attack *Civil rights group calls on Zuckerberg to follow Supreme Court's lead*

Washington, D.C. -- Representing nearly a million American citizens and their families, the National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws (NARSOL) is asking Facebook to permit registered sex offenders to create and maintain user accounts on the world's largest forum for social communication for the first time since early 2009.

On June 19, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that laws prohibiting access to social media sites such as Facebook are unconstitutional when applied to registered citizens who are no longer under any form of judicial sentencing such as probation or post-release supervision.

A week after the unanimous decision was handed down, NARSOL's Executive Director, Brenda V. Jones, sent a letter on behalf of the civil rights group's board of directors calling on Zuckerberg and Facebook to end its nine-year-old policy prohibiting registered citizens from creating or maintaining accounts.

Facebook—along with the then much larger MySpace—was browbeaten into a 2008 agreement with state attorneys general prohibiting registered citizens from accessing its online forum for social networking. Since then, Facebook has grown from 150 million users to nearly 1.4 billion, a fact noted by the eight supreme court justices who decided in favor of Lester Packingham and against a NC law prohibiting access to social media.

NARSOL's letter is addressed personally to Mark Zuckerberg and cites to Facebook's newly revised mission statement: "*To give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together,*" and its logical connection with these words from the Supreme Court's decision: "*Even convicted criminals—and in some instances especially convicted criminals—might receive legitimate benefits from these means for access to the world of ideas, in particular if they seek to reform and to pursue lawful and rewarding lives.*"

"This is the next logical step to take," said Brenda Jones, NARSOL'S executive director. "Denying First Amendment rights to American citizens based solely upon status or a pejorative label has now been condemned by the highest court in the land. Now it's time for Facebook to take this even further by removing its blanket ban."

"The world has changed considerably since 2008. It's nearly impossible for a person to function without access to these ubiquitous forums for keeping up with family and friends, exchanging photos, discussing ideas, expressing opinions for and against whatever happens to interest you. The Court recognized this in its decision. It's time Facebook did the exact same thing. Bring down this un-American ban, Mr. Zuckerberg!" Jones concluded.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RATIONAL SEXUAL OFFENSE LAWS
Fighting to restore dignity & constitutional rights to millions

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