

Written Comment by Andrew G. Osmun

When laws are passed, they are passed with good intentions, but some do not always produce good results such as the Sex Offender Registry (SOR). With all its restrictions, originally created for dangerous sexual offenders, the registry has now evolved into a “one-size-fits-all” system where nonviolent, first-time offenders with no criminal records and do not jeopardize public safety are subjected to the same rules and regulations as violent sexual offenders because the registry involves everyone and anyone who commits any type of contact or non-contact sexual crime and must automatically register, some for years and others for life whether it’s indecent exposure, public urination, child pornography (C.P.), Romeo and Juliet crimes and for being curious about their bodies without knowing or understanding the consequences

### 1) ineffective

The registry costs taxpayers millions without preventing public safety ... but counterproductive for it gives the public a false sense of security since new sexual crimes are committed by people NOT on the registry ... but known to their victims for they are family members, friends, people in authority and many times other juveniles. lead healthy, productive lives.

We all want the same outcome ... prevention of sexual abuse and treatment to prevent future abuse which will greatly reduce the number of victims ... for everyone ... victims, offenders and family ... so all can lead healthy, productive lives. This is what we all should be striving for... instead failed policies continue to exist creating new victims and offenders every day.

A lot of research and surveys have been done on this topic which show the recidivism rate ranges between 3 to 7% compared to non-sexual offenses which are in the double-digit numbers.

These sentences should fit the crime but they do not ... they served their time and are the only ones singled out by being chastised endlessly and relentlessly time and again ... not for what they already did but for what they MIGHT do the future ... costing taxpayers millions instead of using cost-saving alternatives such as probation, treatment programs and rehabilitation so they can have a second chance a ... instead they are being reprimanded continuously and their punishment and retribution is endless.

### 2) shaming/punishment/punitive

Finding *employment* and *housing* becomes very difficult if not impossible for no one wants to be associated with them. With restriction requirements, many can’t participate in family activities and lack community support. Instead, they and their families are subjected to harassment, vigilantism, vandalism and even murdered for being on the registry. These factors contribute to recidivism rather than reduce it and yet some fortunate ones are taxpayers still with life-time sentences.

Unfortunately, they are rejected by their communities but still expected to reintegrate without tools needed to become self-sufficient contributing to recidivism rather than reducing it. This makes it difficult if not impossible for them to become productive members of society ... that is productive members of their home Town, City, State.

They can’t attend any family functions such as any of their children’s school or sports activities, graduations, picnics, family gatherings, etc. Is it fair that their children suffer because of a poor choice their parent made years ago.

### 3) expensive

The Federal Government and individual States spend millions every year on the registry in which the majority are low-risk who are NOT a threat to the public instead of using these resources on prevention and treatment programs that will reduce the # of victims and prevent future potential people from offending in the first place. If we want to prevent this abuse, children must know how not to become victims ... however, treatment programs must also be available to potential offenders to prevent future victims ... this is what the U.S. should be aiming for ... instead failed policies continue to punish this undesirable group. However, today too many people's livelihood depends on this industry that has destroyed so many lives and continues to every day with inaccurate and misleading information instead of educating the public on myths and facts about sex offenders.

Millions of tax dollars are used on the registry which protects no one for new SEXUAL crimes are committed by first-time offenders who are not on the registry but known to their victims. These funds should be allocated for treatment programs to help victims become survivors but also prevent potential future abusers from offending which would greatly reduce the number of future victims. Some don't need treatment while others with sexual problems/addictions do ... but none are available as there are for non-sexual offenders with addictions ... so how can the abuse stop. There are some organizations that provide treatment for offenders that would prevent future crimes and prevent future victims ... but because of our mandated sexual laws, how many are willing to risk that chance??

#### 4) collateral damage

The registry was implemented to protect children ... but are children being protected when the majority of victims are abused *within the family circle by people they know and trust* ... along with the innocent and unfortunate children of registrants who also suffer physical and emotional trauma because the registry brings shame, humiliation, bullying and threats and their only crime is that a parent is on the registry... so the registry does little to protect any child but places many low-risk offenders and their families in constant danger. *This is life threatening!! Please let them live in safety instead of living in constant fear.*

The registry is also a prison ... one without bars; however, the individual is not the only one on it, we all are on it, registrants, parents, spouses, children, siblings, even relatives, friends, and neighbors, therefore, we are also being punished along with them. This is what the registry does to people convicted of sexual offenses and they are the only group after serving their sentences are continually and relentlessly punished with punitive life sentences even though their recidivism rates are lower than non-sexual offenders who are NOT under such strict restrictions and supervision for the rest of their lives!

#### 5) vigilantism

However, what is unconscionable is that the registry allows potential lunatics and fanatics to use the list as a *vigilante tool that targets all sex offenders as child molesters* damaging or destroying properties, others were robbed, beaten, mugged and even murdered including family members ... only because they were on the registry.

#### 6) Summary: Registries

- are not a safety tool
- costs Federal and State budgets millions
- do not prevent sexual abuse
- does not stop new sexual crimes committed by people not on registry
- causes people on it to become jobless, homeless, without family and community support making them hopeless

The DOJ should focus on creating a system that works, not further codifying a system that doesn't.