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ATTORNEY GENERAL



Office of The Attorney General
State of Connecticut

**TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
MARCH 20, 2006**

I appreciate the opportunity to support several of the concepts in Senate Bill 56, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders.

This bill would clarify and expand the crimes that require registration as a convicted sex offender to include sexual assault by a coach on a minor. It would also specifically require that a registrant notify the Department of Public Safety of any name change and mandate that a sex offender must register in Connecticut if convicted of a crime requiring registration in another state.

I have successfully defended Megan's Law against constitutional attack and have worked closely with the Department of Public Safety in its implementation. Our experience has led the Department and my office to conclude that a number of changes are appropriate and necessary.

Sex offenders change their names seeking to avoid detection on the Department's website. Senate Bill 56 contains a provision recommended by the Department of Public Safety and my office last year would require the sex offender to provide the Department with the offender's new name so that the Department may update the website. The legislation would also impose a lifetime registration requirement on any sex offender convicted on two separate occasions of failing to notify the registry of a change in name or address.

Another source of difficulty is a provision that requires review of other state laws to determine whether they contain essential elements of Connecticut laws that require registration. Such review is time-consuming and open to challenge. Senate Bill 56 also contains a recommendation by my office and the Department of Public Safety -- repeated last year -- that would streamline this process. It provides that a convicted sex offender registered in another state must also register in Connecticut if he becomes a resident.

The legislation also requires court imposition of GPS monitoring of individuals convicted of certain sex crimes. The proposal should be amended to add a more general provision that the court has authority to order GPS monitoring as a condition of probation whenever public safety would be enhanced or served. I urge consideration of a law similar to Iowa and Florida statutes

that prohibit certain sex offenders found guilty of crimes against children from residing within 2,000 feet of a school or day care center.

Finally, Senate Bill 56 requires that the Megan's Law registry contain additional information about the crime committed by the registrant. This summary should be carefully reviewed to ensure that it accurately reflects the information contained in the criminal court records. Our Megan's Law was successfully defended in part because the information in the registry is public information directly from such records.

Thank you.