

YOUR NAME
ADDRESS
TOWN, PA #####
#####

July 1, 2020

Official's NAME
ADDRESS
TOWN, PA #####

Re: Sex offense registries and prevention of sexual abuse

Dear _____,

Thank you for your public service and for taking the time to review my letter.

The way that we as a Commonwealth are trying to prevent sex crimes from happening is ineffective. Sex offender registries do not work.

*[Insert a personal story here. We have learned that **emotions** change peoples' minds. We can have great research and fact cards, but EMOTIONS are what start the ball rolling. Was your family member banned from a church? Did you lose a job? Did you serve years in prison for a registry violation? Are you unable to pick up your kids from school? Is traveling out-of-state an awful mess because you don't know if you're going to violate SORNA? Keep it focused on the PA Registry, NOT on probation or parole.*

Include a brief paragraph on how the Registry is harming people in the community that your official serves in.]

Two decades of research shows that:

- The number of sexual crimes has not decreased since registries were put in place.
- Rates of recidivism are low (contrary to popular belief).
- Over 95% of all sexual abuse is perpetrated by first-time offenders.
- The majority of sexual offenses are committed by people who already have a relationship with their victim (as opposed to "stranger danger").

Obviously, 99% of Pennsylvanians want to protect children and adults from sexual exploitation. However, the research on sexual offense laws and prevention of child sexual abuse (CSA) has shown that increasing the severity of punishments for sexual offenses are not an effective strategy at keeping children safe. Because the majority of sexual offenses are committed by first-time offenders, simply keeping people convicted of these types of crimes in prison (or on registries) longer does not equal better public safety.

Prevention of sexual abuse needs proactive action. Experts in the prevention of CSA recommend a campaign that treats sexual abuse as a public health issue. To make gains, we need to

- Convene leadership in all PA agencies with a stake in CSA to create a plan for prevention.
- Increase funding for research focused on prevention.
- Grow a team of scientists with expertise in CSA.
- Increase knowledge by including CSA prevention into social and educational policy and educate the media.

I know that we can do better here in Pennsylvania, and I want you to get behind meaningful reform on the way we address sex offenses. Public-shaming registries are ruining peoples' lives and they do nothing to keep Pennsylvanians safe.

For more information, please see the PA Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws at www.parsol.org/.

Thanks again for your time.

Sincerely,

NAME