

Written Testimony RE: HB 5679

FROM: Donald Schultz
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TO: Michigan House Judiciary Committee

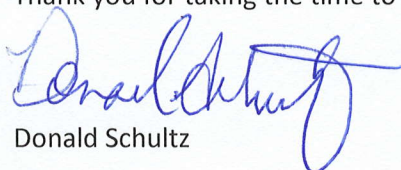
Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony regarding the impact to me.

I will bullet point my concerns for clarity.

The revisions to the original SORA Legislation proposed by HB 5679 impact me directly by:

- Not allowing me a path off of the registry. Despite the fact that I have had no criminal offenses in the 12 years since my one and only conviction, I have no ability to remove the “scarlet letter” from myself and demonstrate rehabilitation. Anyone who believes that being publicly posted to a website as a Registered Sex Offender is not a barrier to societal re-entry is not living in reality. I am denied housing, jobs, and the ability to rebuild my reputation. How can I effectively get back onto my feet if there is no way out? People with long criminal history to include arson, serious drug offenses, and robbery are not subjected to these limitations upon release from custody yet I am.
- The 1,000 School Zone Property Line provision is too difficult for me to figure out. Just exactly how am I supposed to know where the property lines all start and stop in my daily life and not accidentally violate the law when going to a laundry mat, for example? What about weekends and Holidays? Why are these zones applicable in times when there should be no children present?
- Constant In person reporting is onerous. Despite the additional days added for changes/updates to my information, the local Sheriff’s department Records office is open from 8:00AM to 4:00PM Monday through Friday. This is right in the middle of my working hours. Each time I have to change/update I have to report in person and this requires me to LOSE PAY, and SUFFER EMBARRASSMENT because my employer will want to know why I am taking time off. This puts my job in jeopardy every time I must do it. It is not just the periodic reporting that is the issue; it is the requirement to report ANY change in-person.
- Creates a chilling effect upon my 1st Amendment rights to speak freely. Although the bill does not explicitly state I cannot take out a screen name to post a comment on a political website, if I know that I must report this new screen name to the Sheriff’s office and take time off work and lose pay to do so, I am far less likely to share my political opinions, and have avoided political discourse in order to avoid the onerous provision to drive to the Sheriff’s office and stand in line to update records.

Thank you for taking the time to listen.



Donald Schultz