

## Melissa Sweet

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**From:** christie <christie.gentner@wowway.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 5, 2020 5:35 PM  
**To:** Melissa Sweet  
**Subject:** House Bill 5679

Dear Committee Clerk Melissa Sweet,

Can you please provide the committee members, of HB 5679, the following testimony:

Dear Representatives,

My wife and I currently have a family member, who plead nolo contendere, and is serving time in the Michigan Department of Corrections for a sex offense. We are writing this testimony to help make a change to the Michigan Sex Offender Law. We feel that, once a person is convicted of a sex crime, and serves their time, they should not be punished when they are released back into society. We would like SORA to be eliminated, permanently, because it not only causes problems for the person convicted and released, but also the family and friends of that person. If SORA cannot be eliminated, we would like personal information to not be made public. Law enforcement and parole officers should be the only people who have this personal information. The reason, we say this is because I have read many stories about people who do their time for a sex offense and are harassed by neighbors, can't get a job and continue to be punished. Putting personal information on SORA, for the public's eyes, only causes more problems for that person.

When a person, who was convicted of a sex crime, is released back into society, we believe they face worse punishment than being in prison. First, we have read that many business will hire someone convicted of a felony, only if it wasn't a sex crime. How is this person able to make a living and become part of society, when they are still being punished for a crime where they already served their time? Second, how is a person, who is now out from doing time for a sex crime, able to function in society? What I am speaking of is they have to be very careful on where they go and where they try to get a job, because if it's within a certain distance from a school or park, they can get into trouble and be sent back to prison. Third, the threat of Vigilantism against the felon and the people they know is a major problem. A person who does their time for a sex crime should not have to worry about what is going to happen to them or their family or friends, because with a click of a button, someone can find out where sex offenders live and work. We believe this only causes more crime, when the public knows this personal information. Also, this felon finally gets a job, and is fired because someone they work with finds out that they are a sex offender and doesn't want to work at the same business.

Fourth, We are not condoning any crime, but when someone who was convicted for a crime, other than a sex offense, and is let out on parole is able to find work, live where ever they want, and have a somewhat normal life. On the other hand, the sex offender is punished for the rest of their lives. How fair is that? It's not fair at all. What if this sex offender wanted to better themselves and become a positive part of society again by going to college and getting a degree. Oh wait, colleges will not let that person attend, because of their criminal background.

Finally, society should not be the judge and jury after a sex offender is released from prison, only God has that job. Actually, SORA should not be allowed to be viewed by the public's eyes and people who have a criminal sexual conduct background should be able to live a somewhat normal life after prison. We believe everyone deserves a second chance. I hope all of you really look deep into the Michigan Sex Offender Law and make changes that will help a person become a positive part of society without living in fear, because these laws do not guarantee recidivism.

I want to thank all the Representatives for taking time out of their day to read our testimony.

Sincerely,

Joseph and Christie Gentner