

Representative Graham Filler
Chairman House Judiciary Committee
House of Representatives
Lansing Michigan

Re: House Bill 5679

Dear Representative Filler:

Since it is unsafe for me to travel to the public meeting of the judicial committee during the covid crisis, I need to make my voice heard as I am impacted by House Bill 5679.

Several lawyers, and advocates have been working with the legislature since 2016 to propose a just and fair alternative to the current SORA laws. There were many areas of agreement since then, and this proposed bill does not incorporate any of those agreements or addresses the Constitutional flaws in Michigan's Sex Offender Registration Act.

My son, as well as my family, is directly affected by the registry. My son had a traumatic brain injury when he was 6 years old. Because the injury affected his behavior, his judgement and impulse control was affected. He has had a tough time with loneliness. I have had him in therapy for this on and off through the years. Because of this loneliness, he began random texting on the internet. Unfortunately, a few of those texts were of a sexual nature. He is a totally non violent person and never physically touched anyone. He was caught in a police sting online. He did not go to jail, but was given a 3 year probation and was told to register for 25 years for this one costly mistake.

This happened when he was 39 years old and he had never been in trouble with the law before. He carries a Scarlett letter that has crushed his spirit, and brought him and our family great heartache. He has tried to commit suicide and has been very depressed since this cruel and unusual punishment does not allow him to live, work, or even visit some relatives. There is no way for him to get off this registry at all. He is in therapy now full time and is trying to recover.

Finally, this bill does not change the registry in a meaningful way. It is a never ending punishment for all. Why would you want to pass a bill that is not grounded in evidence, takes away people's dignity, leaves them jobless, homeless, mentally ill, and pariahs in their communities with no way out? Useful laws come out of common sense and evidence. This bill should be based on individual necessity and scientific risk assessment.

I am asking that you pass an evidence based Constitutional bill with a path off the registry. This will better serve registrants and the public.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Brissette
8663 Meade Street
Montague, Michigan 49437
231-557-0358

