

Hello Committee members,

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony against HB-5679. Due to my work requirements I am not able to provide live testimony. To keep this brief, I will touch on only 2 aspects of this bill. I hope that by sharing my experiences as a registrant you will work to modify the current bill.

My story and testimony:

I found myself involved in the justice system for the first time at age 40. I was charged with 3 counts of 750.520e against and adult, a misdemeanor. I was sentenced with a few months of jail time, a couple thousand dollars in fines, probation of 5 years, 500 hours of community service and 15 years of registration. I am now in the last year of probation and there is nothing to look forward to besides 10 more years of required registration. I know there is chance to petition after the initial 10 years however I have yet to find a lawyer who was successful in this attempt and I am not able to locate any statics reading a Tier 1 registrants achieving the early relief.

School Safety Zones:

After 18 years I was forced to move out of my home as it was in the gray area of the 1000 ft section of the current law. Depending on the opinion of the person, my home was approximately 950 to 1200 ft from a church that has a school located on their grounds. For good reason, this aspect of the current law was found unconstitutional and the proposed HB-5679 attempts to resolve this by adding the property line language but does not have any details. How do I determine the property line? Who is responsible for determining and reporting this distance? Is there a difference between the Church property and the school's? Is moving one house down the street making anyone safer? My offense was not related to a child so why is this relevant to my situation? I want to be able to live in my house free from unexpected arrest and prosecution.

Thankfully my children have remained in the home as to attend their same schools and I hope to move back to avoid missing any more time with them. Currently I am living with a family member as every apartment and rental in my area refused me based on my registration status. I urge you to consider the burden of school safety zones regarding housing locations.

Employment:

A misdemeanor conviction is not a barrier towards most employment opportunities. In my situation as 750.520e is a misdemeanor, I was not automatically fired. With heavy support from my local manager, I was able to maintain my employment however it's a daily worry. In the event someone approaches HR with concerns of working with a registrant, I will find myself quickly without employment. If that day comes, I fear my opportunities will be severely impacted, not due to my conviction but due to being registered for 10 years after of my supervision period has ended.

Another factor affecting my current and future employment is the inability to travel for work obligations. I was able to gain approval for travel during probation however registration simply prevents travel to many countries. How long you can stay and your responsibilities while traveling out of state requires understanding of complex SOR laws of other states. As above these limitations are in affect long after completing my supervision period.

Conclusion:

I did not mention the public shaming, stories of the bullying of my children face, the impact of normally private details of your life shared publicly on a website. I did not mention the numerous studies that prove registry are ineffective to securing the safety of the public. I hope that you refer to the experts and other citizens who have testified to these items. I ask that you make the following considerations while working on HB-5679 and allow people to find a successful life after completing their sentencing requirements:

1. Eliminate the public registry and return it to private police access only.
2. Eliminate School Safety Zones for residential or working locations.
3. Eliminate lifetime registration and reduce the lengths of Tier 1 and 2. A 15-year sentence on the registry for a misdemeanor is too long. Please consider registration only during state supervision periods.
4. Provide a path off the registry for all tier levels. Specify specific requirements to meet and be removed from the registry without the need for arguments in front of a Judge.
5. Consult with the lawyers and advocates that have working since 2016 to find a fair and just revision this law.

Thank you very much for your time.

-Mike D.