

May 18, 2020

Dear Chairperson Filler and Representatives,

I have been following the discussion of HB 5679 and I wish to state my strong opposition to this bill as currently written.

I personally cannot imagine the stress and pain current laws inflict unjustly-per multiple court rulings-on so many registrants and their families. These laws must be changed to allow those who have completed their sentences to move on and integrate into society and establish productive responsible lives without the consistent marginalization and prejudice levied against them and their families.

Beyond the cost of human suffering which we have heard extensively from those testifying, the citizens of Michigan are bearing an enormous financial cost of maintaining the registry and monitoring an ever increasing number of individuals mandated to register as a result of the SORA laws. This cost, per your own committee's internal assessment, is projected to increase should HB 5679 be adopted.

Extensive evidence has been presented and shows the wastefulness of these expenditures. Virtually every study we have heard and I've personally researched demonstrates extremely low recidivism and continues to reaffirm 95+% of sex crimes are committed by friends, family members or individuals known to the victims, not previous offenders. While some may suggest being on the registry prevents re-offending, the low recidivism results are the same when compared to sex offense recidivism in Canada where no registry exists. So essentially we are spending millions and millions of Michigan taxpayer dollars without real benefit.

I personally wanted to understand the financial impact of our SORA laws in greater detail and am shocked at the very limited financial assessment relative to the implementation and operation of the registry and associated compliance monitoring. As a business person, I am used to looking at an ROI (return on Investment) for major expenditures. This doesn't seem to be the case with SORA in Michigan.

The only comprehensive financial assessment I could find estimated the cost of implementing and achieving compliance (not just the cost of managing the database through MSP office) with SORNA, the Federal program, performed in 2009. This study demonstrated the cost to Michigan in 2009 was projected to be **\$16,336,082.00**. I did a quick analysis based on today's dollars and the 2020 amount equates to ~\$1,841,400.00. That is an enormous amount of money expended to implement unconstitutional laws.

Considering the fact that there are about 44,000 individuals currently on the registry, and about 75% are classified as Tier 3 with lifetime monitoring and no recourse to be removed, AND Michigan adds about 2,000 people annually the costs are prohibitive.

HB 5679 does not substantively change these components, continues to provide lifetime registration with no chance for removal, and includes an extensive list of Tier 1, 2 & 3 offenses, thus ensuring ever increasing cost to taxpayers. I do not think this is something our current legislators want to do. I do not think Representative Lower or others would be inclined to be wasteful of our money.

The dollars spent on SORA could be dramatically decreased and refocused in a way that manages those at highest risk, gives offenders a way toward reform and integration and supports the victims of the crimes. Much quality work has been done to help shape reasonable laws I hope you will consider significant revisions to address the shortcomings of HB 5679 as I believe our legislators have a responsibility to use taxpayer money effectively to benefit the well-being of our citizens.

Respectfully

Cathryn Pawlusiak