

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I want to personally thank you for your service on the committee and the dedication you have shown. I particularly want to thank you for giving me the opportunity yesterday to speak to the committee regarding HB5679. I appreciate your time. I also wanted to share with a little more detail the story of my son-in-law and why I am standing up for him and others who face the burdensome requirements of our current MI SORA laws.

You heard the testimony of numerous individuals who have suffered many unforeseen and unintended consequences of being on the registry. I think you would agree that many of these individuals have suffered much additional punishment on top of their prison time. This is one reason I am opposed to HB5679. It goes beyond whatever prison sentence was originally handed out and effectively grinds a person's spirit into the dirt as they sincerely try to comply with the myriad and confusing requirements of exclusion zones, reporting deadlines and details, technical violations and the like. Add to this the social stigma, vigilante-ism, etc. from being on a public registry and what has happened is that these laws have created what is the social equivalent of a leper class. Those that are shunned by society and kept outside of the camp. I'm sure that's not what the original intent of these laws were when written but this is what they have become.

For my son-in-law the transition back into our home and family will be easier than for most I'm sure. He has a loving family to support him. But David and my daughter's life will never be 'normal' in any sense. He will have given up 10 years of his life and marriage at a minimum. Once he has returned home he will be lucky to find that accounting position with an employer who doesn't view his name on the registry as an immediate show-stopper. The chance to work in the church nursery with children is just a memory now. I doubt they will ever be able to adopt their own children as they had planned. And this punishment will go on in perpetuity unless you find it in your hearts to stop these over-reaching and over-bearing laws embodied in the current MI SORA code. HB5679 does NOT do this and so I would ask you to make the corrections needed to give David and my daughter a future with dignity as they try to rebuild their lives after David is released.

Please read the short description I have attached of how Dave ended up in this situation. And then ask yourself if you think people like Dave and others should be punished for the rest of their lives for the sins of their youth. We all need forgiveness in our lives as we have all failed in many ways. Please correct HB5679 to be a sensible, meaningful and compassionate law if you feel you must have a registry. And please remember David and others as you go about this most difficult task. Thank you for listening to our story and doing the work of the people of Michigan.

Sincerely,

Jack Wagner