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Fax Cover Sheet

Date 11/28/20 Fax No. _____
 Attention MELISSA Sweet Phone (313) 850-8783
 From JEFFERY WISE Phone _____
 E-mail godtjeffery@yahoo.com
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URGENT FOR REVIEW PLEASE COMMENT PLEASE RECYCLE

Notes

Ms. Sweet

Could you please send these papers
to All (House + Senate) Legislator
members Regarding HB 5679

Sincerely
Jeffery Wise

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November 28, 2020

Ms. MELISSA SWEET
COMMITTEE CLERK

Dear HOUSE & SENATE MEMBERS

My name is Jeffery Wise, and I am 62 years old. I am from Michigan. I currently work at the Labors Local #1191 in Detroit and I have been there for 14 years, but I have worked all my life. I have been married for 29 years. My wife, Lori, and I are hoping to retire in the next few years. We want to travel, move and enjoy our retirement. In 1992 I pleaded guilty criminal sexual conduct- assault with intent to commit sexual penetration pursuant to MCL 750.520g(1), and two misdemeanors of indecent exposure pursuant to MCL 750.335a. I was sentenced to 5-10 years of which I served the minimum of five. As a part of my sentence, I was required to register as a sex offender for 25 years after I was released, but as a result of the 2006 and 2011 amendments to the state's Sex Offender Registry Act (SORA), I am now required to be registered for the rest of my life. This is a heavy burden to carry, and therefore I am writing to you in hopes that you might be able to give me some advice.

My intentions in writing this letter are to show who I truly am, and what I have done since my conviction over 28 years ago. I am a changed man. I am not the person I was 26 years ago. I pray for a chance of one day being removed from SORA.

Although there are limited avenues for some registered sex offenders to be removed from the list, I am not a candidate because of changes in the law that now force me to register for life.

The state's Sex Offender Registry Act was first enacted in 1994. Originally, this established a confidential non-public law-enforcement database of the individuals' addresses. There were no regular reporting requirements. Over the years there have been various changes to the law, but the most extreme changes came in 2006 and 2011. In 2006 and 2011, the state legislature expanded SORA creating harsher measures for registrants, like myself. Among many other restrictions, the amendments retroactively made many registrants like me, register for life and imposed geographic exclusion zones barring me from living anywhere near a school. The changes were imposed without due process or a mechanism for review. This was fundamentally unfair since I faithfully registered for 25 years as originally required.

During my youth, I followed the footsteps of my dad and became a bricklayer. I worked for 12 years before being employed with the Laborers Local. During and after high school I played hockey. I have no prior juvenile criminal history. Unfortunately, in 1991 when I was 33, I made a terrible decision that led to my incarceration.

During my imprisonment, I challenged myself to stay busy and be a model prisoner. I started a hockey team in prison to motivate other prisoners. I worked and volunteered throughout my time in prison to make small amounts of money so I would not burden my family financially. For part of my time, I worked in the license plate unit. My family continually visited me. I also contribute my growth to my faith and love in the Lord. In 1997, I was released from prison, and I completed my two-year parole sentence with no problems at all. In 2004 I joined the Labors Local #1191, in Detroit, Michigan.

My wife Lori and my dad never gave up on me, and once I was released, it was my turn to take care of them. In 2006 things took a turn for the worst for Lori and I when we found out she had a life-threatening mass on the back of her head. After Lori's surgery she was in a coma for a month, and for three years she was unable to read or write. I spent those years helping her

learn how to read and write again and use her motor skills. Lori is no longer able to drive, so I secured her a job with me at the Labor's Local so I can drive her to work. In recent years, my dad's health was not doing great. I moved my dad to Michigan from Florida so that I could take him to his doctors' appointments. I found him an exceptional assisted living home, where I visit him often. I am a changed man; I am a loving, caring husband and son. I am a hard worker. I am not the person I was 26 years ago.

If it were not for the SORA amendments that increased my SORA registration to life, I would have been able to petition to be removed off SORA and continue with my life. When this amendment was applied retroactively, there was no individual risk assessment conducted for the affected people. This change in the law is keeping me on SORA well passed my original 25-year term. I have done nothing to deserve the stigma of life registration.

SORA was intended to protect the public from sex offenders. Since the registry is so large now, it is hard for police to know which former offenders need continued monitoring. Currently, Michigan has the fourth largest state registry in the country, and as of November 2017 there were almost 43,000 people on Michigan's registry with approximately 2,000 more people are added to the registry each year, or about five a day. While some dangerous people are rightfully on SORA, there are many more like me that have paid their debt to society and have demonstrated that they can reform their ways and once again, become productive members of the community.

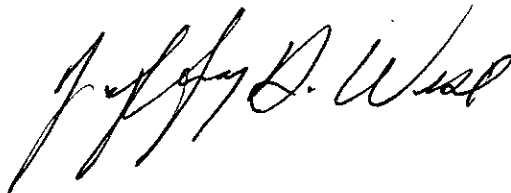
The ACLU of Michigan brought a case in 2012 regarding the above-mentioned SORA amendments. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals mentioned that Michigan could not cast people out as "moral lepers" solely based on a past offense without any determination that they present a risk to the community. Experts testified that while some sex offenders pose a significant threat, most do not --- nor do most commit sex offenses again after their convictions.

I have taken full responsibility for my actions and served my 25-year term on the SORA registration, but now I am on SORA for life. On behalf of myself and others who have turned their life around for the better, received treatment and have proven they are not a danger to the community, I ask you to consider sponsoring a bill that allows registrants to apply to be removed from the registry after 25 years. Perhaps you could require a risk assessment to demonstrate that we are not at risk for reoffending. I would love the opportunity for my wife and I to be able to live a normal life without being labeled as a sex offender everywhere I go. I do not deserve to wear this scarlet letter anymore.

As a Legislator, you have the power to change laws when they have lost their purposefulness or need to be revised. The length of time people have been placed on SORA amounts to cruel and unusual punishment, The 43,000 currently on SORA cannot all be unredeemable. I have shown that people can and do turn their lives around.

I would like to meet with you and share my story. As I said earlier, you can make important changes that affect the lives of your citizens. I hope you take some time to think about my request. I truly appreciate you listening to my story.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffery D. Wise". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "W".

Jeffery Wise