

July 12, 2016

RE: SB 1027 – Add Work and Volunteer Restrictions to MCL 28.734

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and Bill Sponsors,

As a Juvenile Advocate I am concerned not only about the sexual abuse of children, but the consequences of sex offender registration on juvenile offenders. Rightfully, the U.S. DOJ and the SMART Office have expressed the same concerns.

I oppose changes to MCL 28.734 (1)(c) of Michigan Sex Offender Registration law as defined in SB 1027 for the following reasons:

1. "Works with" is too vague, and will surely meet with court disapproval. It should be more specifically defined. For example, as an organization that provides mental health services, or services to victims of sexual assault.
2. This law change should not preclude youth still attending school or that are members of a youth organization from volunteering as a group with another organization. For example, it is not unusual for both school and non-school honor societies, clubs, music, theatre, or athletic teams to volunteer helping other youth organizations. **We should not prevent this kind of peer appropriate and positive behavior from occurring.** Nor should young offender registrants be placed in the position of suffering humiliation and risk of public attention because they cannot participate in volunteer projects with their clubs/teams. **See recommended changes to SB 1027 attached.**
3. Further, residency and work restrictions for school zones should not even apply to juvenile offender registrants. Research has shown this policy is not efficacious for adult or juvenile offenders. A number of states have, in fact, explicitly not implemented such policies for this very reason (see Minnesota, Maryland, et al.). The U.S. DOJ also advises **against** residency restrictions for sex offender registrants.

I urge you to not implement SB 1027 without the above changes. Your thoughtful consideration of these issues is appreciated. If you have any questions, or would like further information, please feel free to contact me.



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