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I am writing in opposition to SB 231 which would create a Violent Offender Registry. Let me begin by emphasizing that I would not be impacted by such a registry nor do I know anyone personally who would be impacted. I write as a concerned citizen and a Social Worker who is concerned with the unintended consequences.

I attended a town hall meeting not long after the murder of Sierah Joughin and shared my concerns about this proposal. Sierah's mother was present at that time. The concept that "Knowledge is Power", is very similar to that we heard in the early 1990's in New Jersey and Minnesota which started the push for Sex Offender Registries. As our state representatives, it is your duty to take a close look at how sex offender registries are working as you consider starting this new registry.

Over 90% of sexual abuse occurs within the family or circle of friends. The vast majority of violent crimes occur within family circles as well. **The stranger danger is a rare event.** This was sadly the case for Sierah Joughin. The impact of this law will be experienced by individuals and families where the concept of Knowledge if Power would be irrelevant. The result would create similar impacts to the sex offender registry. Consider the results of a July 2016 study by Steven Yoder as an important part of your deliberations.

Now, new research suggests making it harder for offenders to find a place to live might increase reoffending. In a [study](#) released in July 2016, researchers from the California and Canadian justice departments looked at more than 1,600 California sex offenders on probation or parole. Overall, the group's sex-crime recidivism rates were low—less than 5% during the five-year follow-up period. But those who were homeless were over four times more likely to commit a repeat sex crime than those who weren't. "Collectively, transient status seems to be associated with higher sexual recidivism rates," the researchers concluded. That's likely because those who lack stable homes, jobs, and social connections are more prone to reoffend. It should be noted that even when registries are private the information is readily available on the internet which creates a similar impact to public registries.

The question for you as legislators to consider is what the impact for communities in Ohio would be if the violent offender registry creates more transient individuals and families. The concept "Knowledge is Power" is negated by a transient and homeless population.

Both proponents and opponents of SB 231 have the same goal: to make our communities safer. What happened to Sierah and her family is unacceptable. James Worthy has been convicted of this crime and will never experience the impact of SB 231. However, the potential impact of SB 231 will be felt by individuals and families with far less horrific crimes as well as our state in the years to come.