



Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

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House Bill 289
Written Proponent Testimony
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Chair Abrams, Vice-Chair Williams, Ranking Member Brown and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony for House Bill 289 to toll the period of time that a sexually oriented offender or child-victim oriented offender is required to comply with sex offender registration and notification requirements during any period of non-compliance.

Revised Code section 2950.02 sets forth the intent of the Ohio General Assembly in establishing Ohio's sex offender registration and notification law. It provides that "it is the policy of this state to require the exchange in accordance with this chapter of relevant information about sex offenders and child-victim offenders among public agencies and officials and to authorize the release in accordance with this chapter of necessary and relevant information about sex offenders and child-victim offenders to members of the general public as a means of assuring public protection..." In addition, it states that "If the public is provided adequate notice and information about offenders and delinquent children who commit sexually oriented offenses or who commit child-victim oriented offenses, members of the public and communities can develop constructive plans to prepare themselves and their children for the offender's or delinquent child's release from imprisonment, a prison term, or other confinement or detention."

The policy underlying our sex offender registration and notification law is defeated by offenders who fail to register or otherwise comply with the law. This is why failure to register, failure to provide a change of address, and failure to verify are felony offenses. It is also why these offenders should not be able to escape the time periods that they are required to register by failing to comply. House Bill 289 resolves this problem by tolling the time requirements during any period of noncompliance.

According to the Ohio Attorney General there are nearly 500 noncompliant offenders in Ohio today. These offenders should not be able to simply run out the clock on their registration requirements by failing to comply. House Bill 289 prevents this and helps promote the policy that underlies the sex offender registration scheme. We support House Bill 289 and appreciate the work of Reps. Robb Blasdel and Swearingen in the efforts to help protect the public from these offenders. We encourage the committee's favorable consideration of the legislation.