Comment Report

HF 77
A bill for an act modifying sex offender registry requirements by requiring sex offenders whose registration requirements have expired to reregister, and making penalties applicable.

Subcommittee Members: Fisher-CH, Shipley, Wessel-Kroeschell

Date: 02/01/2023
Time: 12:00 PM
Location: RM 304.1

Name:	Brad Parr
Comment:	I stand behind this
Name:	Debra Decker
Comment:	I oppose this. While being new to the world of our children sex offenders I find the laws are ridiculous. Case in point, just today on news a man who had been missing 6 years was found, and charged with sex abuse of a young child got sentenced to 20 years while my son's involved over 16 & he got 45 years.(first time offender).What more can we do to fix the sentencing laws as well as making registy law fare?
Name:	W Person
Comment:	I love how the registry is pushed as not punishment but just being civil. Very few registered citizens are able to deregister. And now passing this law, would make them reregister again when only a few have been able to move on with their life. I find it extremely disgusting and underhanded the people put in forth this bill. Please vote no!
Name:	Roger Hunnicutt
Comment:	This bill is an emotionbased solution looking for a problem. If a registrant were still dangerous he would not even be on parole and would be declared SVP. If he can make it through years of parole requirement, that means he is not high risk. So why take away his incentive to get counseling and become a productive member of society?HF77 is unconstitutional. Iowa has a history of dehumanizing people groups and apologizing for the abuse later. Why is Iowa repeating history? Some politicians who claim to be Christian tell God that registrants are not human and not redeemable, and that their families and children are worthless and deserve public shaming and abuse because their loved one is on a public registry for life. Time to be led by God's word rather than emotionbaiting bills that solve nothing but getting votes.
Name:	Ed Christy
Comment:	This is clearly a solution in search of a problem, and is quite possibly a maneuver to gain political advantage by appearing to protect the public. Recidivism among Tier I through Tier III registrants is extremely low (5%) to begin with. There is absolutely no evidence that adding a tier for those already revoved from the registry would in any way increase public safety. I suspect that the State of Iowa does not have the spare cash to fund every frivolous piece of selfseeking legislation. HF77 should be roundly defeated!
Name:	Jennifer R.
Comment:	I am in strong opposition to this dehumanizing bill. This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.The punishment of registration

should have an end, and registrants who complete their requirements should be able to return to a free life.

Name:	James Norris
Comment:	This bill is expost facto and unconstitutional.
Name:	Anonymous Citizen
Comment:	This is another unconstitutional act being imposed on fellow citizens who have met the said requirements. This has to end. If this is the nation that America has come to be, then it is time to inform the people of the power of the people. This bill must be stopped. My email is attached for anyone who agrees. Thank you. A concerned Citizen.
Name:	Arax Krahling
Comment:	This bill should not become law. It is a dehumanizing bill. Citizens on the registry are redeemable humans in our society. This bill will harm families of registrants, including their children. These laws are made to protect children but they will be harming children. This is a cruel and unusual punishment, period.Please oppose this bill.
Name:	Mark Judkins
Comment:	This bill should be rejected and opposed because it is attempting to amend a sentence already imposed by a court of law and therefore is unconstitutional. It is based on emotion and not fact. Registered Citizens do not as a rule pose danger to society for their lifetime. The fact is that 95% of the sex offenses come from people NOT on the registry. Very few Registered Citizens reoffend, especially after 10 to 20 years. This bill will damage the families of registrants, including their children. Not to fail to mention those registrants gainfully employed, and conducting a law abiding life. Many of those will lose their jobs, and likely their housing. By dehumanizing this population, this bill achieves nothing.
Name:	Kathie Gourlay
Comment:	This is a cruel, uneducated bill. Scientific research shows that people with a convicted sex offense have a relatively low recidivism rate, and that declines over time offense free. By 20 years out in the community with no reoffends, even the people who started out high risk are now no more likely to commit a sex offense than any other felon. There is no reason for lifetime registration.
Name:	David Whitehead
Comment:	This proposed Bill is punitive and UNNECESSARY! Registries themselves have been determined by numerous courts to be Unconstitutional. And extending registration is EX POST FACTO and Cruelty & Unusual Punishment!
Name:	Paul Lambert
Comment:	This bill is an emotionbased solution looking for a problem that doesn't exist.Iowa cannot amend a sentence already imposed by a court.It damages the families of registrants, including their children.This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.This bill dehumanizes registrants.No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.There are no gangs of registrants roaming the streets.HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment.
Name:	Martin R
Comment:	Absolutely offensive. The registry has been declared as punishment and unconstitutional in Michigan,Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and Pennsylvania. To enact a law to add more punishment past what the courts declared is illegal. I oppose this at every turn
Name:	Linda May

Comment:	HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment.This bill is an emotionbased solution looking for a problem.It is unconstitutional. Iowa cannot amend a sentence already imposed by a court.It damages the families of registrants, including their children.This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.This bill dehumanizes registrants.No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.There are no gangs of registrants roaming the streets.
Name:	Kim DeBacco
Comment:	Please, please reconsider this bill which dehumanizes registrants. S.O. registrants are not monsters; they are somebody's son, husband, brother, father. Once registrants have completed registration requirements (which are often questionable, anyway), please allow them to move on with their lives. People can and do change. Don't give in to your fear/s. Show some courage and belief in human nature; lead the thinking on S. O. registration, and OPPOSE THIS BILL.
Name:	Mark Pav
Comment:	This bill is all together not a smart way to fight crime or address a problem. Police and Public safety need to focus on their priorities of protecting Iowans, not in managing the registration of lowrisk individuals. No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.
Name:	David A
Comment:	Do Iowans care at all about the constitution?This is cruel and unusual punishment for individuals who have served their sentence and are at no more risk of reoffending than any other formal criminal.It is also unchristian! Didn't Jesus teach to forgive? I guess some Iowans decide that they are better than our Lord at deciding who to forgive. You should be ashamed of yourselves for proposing this law!Don't kid yourselves: This is a selfserving political move, and does nothing to protect Iowans.
Name:	Michael Neuman
Comment:	I strongly oppose this bill. Please leave people their dignity, privacy and ability to move on with their lives with some hope to restore and rebuild; consider, without prejudice, that they can now do good for themselves and their community removed from fear and shame, and use their experience for good. The registries are political, toxic, unproductive, shaming, costly; they are harmful to families, neighborhoods and communities. What would Jesus do? He would acknowledge them (with decency and respect) and call on them (which includes every person) to go and sin no more. Leave these people alone.. in fact start initiating ways to remove more people, that should be your intention and goal.
Name:	Bob Jones
Comment:	Oh look, more idiotic laws based on the idiotic sex offense registries. America's outofcontrol big governments never learn. They'll do stupid forever.People who support the registries are nothing but harassers who love big government. I promise you that registries don't "work". But they aren't just worthless, they are a lot worse. But do go ahead and carry on. Never wonder where the hate in America comes from. Everyone wants it.The harder you try to oppress people the less successful you will be. Guaranteed.
Name:	Robert Hotter III
Comment:	This is further punishing someone who successfully has rehabilitated and integrated back into society. They served their sentence, and proved to be lalaw abiding citizens. I strongly oppose
Name:	Michael E
Comment:	I fail to understand why politicians refuse to do their homework before they decide to create these unconstitutional bills. What are they attempting to accomplish here? This

community of former offenders are just trying to move forward and live productive lives. I don't see any kind of effort to apply this kind of nonsense to former murderers, drug pushers, etc. Please leave us alone.

Name:	Craig Conner
Comment:	Please stop trying to repunish people who have already served their time. The registry is already proven to be a false sense of security that only does more harm than good. This is an unconstitutional attempt at double jeopardy. Even murders get a chance at rehabilitation. Please read the facts and studies on the effects of registry before making such a rash decision to approve a crazy law.
Name:	Art C.
Comment:	As a former registrant in CA, I am here to say redemption should be available to everyone. We human beings CAN grow and changeespecially with God at your side. I am living proof of the miracle working power of Jesus. Being a registrant is punishment. It is not redemptive. You are forced into the shadows. You are forced into difficult financial conditions because no one will hire you. You are forced into shame with the Scarlet Letter of having to register as a sex offender. There is no refuge in the Earth realm. After the proper time of CORRECTION has occurred there must be redemption on the other side. Most sex offenders do NOT reoffend per studies done. Many are told the sex offenders are animals who will never change. Fear is stoked. The problem is, those fears are not based on real life situations. Many offenders are not even suffering from pedophilic disorder. A OneSizeFitsAll solution does not apply here. Dont needlessly ruin lives by enacting such a misguided proposed law.
Name:	Ben Adams
Comment:	I am voicing my emphatic opposition to HF77. People whose registration requirements have expired by definition have committed no further crimes. Why continue to monitor and penalize them? Do you do this for any other category of crime? Where is the redemption? This is a contemptible ploy to grab votes from people who actually think that everyone on the registry is evil and out to get them. The registrants whose registration requirements have expired have served their time. Let them try to rebuild their lives in peace.
Name:	William Ho
Comment:	I am opposed to this bill that Unconstitutionally compels former Registrants to reregister beyond the court mandated order. It is wrong to circumvent the law to amend a sentence already imposed by the courts. Similarly, the new SORNA rule imposed by DOJ has already been blocked in a California court because it has violated due process and the first Amendment creating precedent for future cases in regard to force registration beyond the sentencing of the former registrant. Pass this law at your state's peril. for the government of Iowa will experience mass lawsuits at such a scale you will not believe and lose massive amounts of tax dollars that could otherwise been better spent. You have been warned.
Name:	Cory Wessels
Comment:	I am opposed to this bill. We need to focus on real rehabilitation (our prison system is not about actual rehabilitation), mental health, proper sexual education and helping people on both sides of the story. This does nothing more than just hurt people (they already have paid their debt to society) and doesn't solve anything.
Name:	Louise Bruce
Comment:	I strtongly oppose this bill. It clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.Please consider facts before introducing "feel good" legislation that does not protect children or the public but only further dmamges and punishes registrants and their families, including children.

Name:	William Ho
Comment:	I am opposed to this bill that Unconstitutionally compels former Registrants to reregister beyond the court mandated order. It is wrong to circumvent the law to amend a sentence already imposed by the courts. Similarly, the new SORNA rule imposed by DOJ has already been blocked in a California court because it has violated due process and the first Amendment creating precedent for future cases in regard to force registration beyond the sentencing of the former registrant. Pass this law at your state's peril. for the government of Iowa will experience mass lawsuits at such a scale you will not believe and lose massive amounts of tax dollars that could otherwise been better spent. You have been warned.
Name:	Karen Rothstein
Comment:	I am unable to attend this meeting and I strongly opposed this bill. No other crime has this requirement. It is cruel and unusual punishment to require a person who has shown their rehabilitation and met the requirements to complete registration to have to register again. To me, this seems like some law makers looking for low hanging fruit on which to hang a victory hat. They are grandstanding on people's fears instead of facts. This is punitive punishment. If people reoffend then they will be put back on the registry. If they are off the registry because they have meet their requirements and served their time, I see no reason to support their requirement to register. It is unconstitutional.
Name:	Kyle Richards
Comment:	I oppose this legislation! You have no legal right to impose an additional penalty on anyone, the court/judge has already ruled and sentenced the individual! Totally unconstitutional!
Name:	Ken Holleman
Comment:	This law is ludicrous, draconian and unnecessary. Just another measure that will not help,only hinder.Using education,therapy and common sense prevention laws is much more practical.
Name:	Ronald Pedersen
Comment:	This is totally unconstitutional punishment, unfair, unjust, a dangerous precedent to set. Once sentenced there should be retroactive vengeance. This is nothing but another reason for people to go postal!
Name:	Michael Pardun
Comment:	I totally disagree with the proposal as it is grossly unconstitutional as well as the registration law to begin with. These lawmakers just need to stop! Or we're going to vote them out of office. Stop doing what you're doing and stop making Americans second class citizens and a subcategory!
Name:	Joanne Doyle
Comment:	I am grateful that my local law enforcement personnel are familiar with the 1% reoffend rates of sex offenders, so that they are not poisoned with the apparent sick imagination of people like Iowa lawmakers!
Name:	Mark Smith
Comment:	I oppose this bill. It is both cruel, vindictive, & unnecessary.
Name:	Angela Gemini
Comment:	I strongly oppose HF77. It is unconstitutional, cruel, and vindictive. Registrants, like other people who have been convicted of a crime, are human and should be allowed a chance for redemption and self improvement once they pay for their crime. This bill does not protect anyone please research the data and make informed decisions that are not based on emotion. The registry makes it almost impossible for registrants to

better themselves and it crushes their families, which include children. Please look up the statistics. There are almost a million people on sex offender registries including minors! The list grows daily with social media and the proliferation of illegal images on the internet. These offenders are not all violent rapists and killers, please review the data. This is the United States of America and once people are punished for their crime, they should be allowed to work toward redemption. Please, please review the facts before destroying peoples lives. Thank you.

Name:	JoEllen Wiggington
Comment:	As a psychological treatment provider I can attest to the fact that this legislation could severely hamper the individuals involved motivation to change and move forward in a prosocial way, inadvertently increasing the risk to public safety.
Name:	Alex Ostroum
Comment:	This bill serves no purpose. Someone's who's completed their time should not arbitrarily be placed back on the registry for nothing more than a purely political decision. This is being done for no other reason than for the bill sponsors to have something to hang their hat on for the next election. It's certainly not being done for public safety. You should be ashamed for harassing people and wasting tax payer money.
Name:	Harold Gregory
Comment:	Outrageous and unconscionable measure for what should be obvious reasons. This is unabated wholeness that must not stand !
Name:	Jeremy Clark
Comment:	This bill is fraud and one should not be removed from such a requirement then retroactively told they must do it again or face fines or imprisonment. This is ridiculous.
Name:	David Ray
Comment:	This bill is facially unconstitutional and judicially illlegal.You cannot revisit and refinalize a judges' decision for the length of registration nor can you change the length of registration without due process of law.You are probably going to pass this no matter what people tell you, but you are going to lose in court, because it is going to produce multiple lawsuits and they will win and you will lose.Also, there is no good reason for this bill at all!All the premises for the sex offender registry have been proven false!A truly effective bill would be one that installs cameras in all daycare centers, all classrooms and teacher lounges, all doctor's offices, etc., because this is where 95% or more of all sex offenses occur, and these people are NOT on the registry, and also a bill that educates children that no one, not family member, not doctor, not gym coach, not teacher, not police officer, nor anyone else is to touch them where they should not and they are to tell when they do, even if threatened.All of America is being foolishly programmed to bark up the wrong tree which is the registry instead of focusing on where 95% or more of these offenses occur and therefore by creating and attempting to pass this bill YOU are adding to the problem and bypassing the solution and allowing the real dangerous places(day care centers, school teachers, gym coaches, doctors, etc.) to go unchecked.People are sex offenders BEFORE they are caught.No one walks into the police department and tells them to put them on the registry before commit a sexual offenseno one!The sex offender registry is an afterthefact obligation.You ought to work on a bill that is preventitive against the 95% who are NOT on the registry that are molesting children right under your nose, instead of trying to pass a bill that does nothing but fool the public into thinking you are making laws that make the community safer.
Name:	Raquel Ayra
Comment:	I wish to express my opposition to this bill. Registrants should be treated as are

others who have already "done the time". ALL people have basic human rights and this bill passing would make it impossible to reenter society which is a big piece to preventing recidivism! It is unconstitutional. Iowa cannot amend a sentence already imposed by a court.It damages the families of registrants, including their children.This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.This bill dehumanizes registrants.No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.There are no gangs of registrants roaming the streets.

Name:	Terri Taylor
Comment:	I completely OPPOSE this bill!
Name:	Barbara Preston
Comment:	This bill appears to add requirements to those who have already successfully met the requirements imposed by the courts. It does nothing to improved public safety but continues to punish people who have served their sentence or met requirements. No other persons are singled out for such ongoing penalties. It seems unconstitutional to amend a sentence already imposed by a court. The bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed and it further punishes and damages the families of registrants, including their children.
Name:	Aaron Davidson
Comment:	I strongly oppose this. So the decision is, are you going to keep pushing laws and spending money on ineffective things like this, which all the data available shows is ultimately a waste of money because it's ineffective, causes more problems, and doesn't actually protect anyone, or are you going to put the money towards things that actually help, protect, and provide a service to the population? It shouldn't be a hard choice after all of that, unless actual data and facts don't mean anything to you.
Name:	Ken Seim
Comment:	It seems that studies have show that registration doesn't improve the safety of our communities. This seems vindictive and puts the state and country in a position to support those trying to set their lives on a new course.Do not support this unjust action.
Name:	Rick Ostring
Comment:	This bill is unconstitutional. No other category of crime is treated in this manner.
Name:	David Kale
Comment:	I totally oppose this and any other attempt to double punish anyone who has completed the courts sentence, especially when a large percentage of registrants don't belong on the registry to begin with. All tier one and some tier two people should be removed now. Look at how many dead men and women remain on the Florida registry, only to now punish their children and grandchildren until its demanded by the public for correction.
Name:	Aaron Perez
Comment:	Someone has done their time let them move on with their life. The whole point of jail & prison is rehabilitation. To punish someone for the rest of their life is a violation of our constitution, cruel & unusual punishment.
Name:	Martin Smith
Comment:	I oppose this bill it creates problems for the families of registrants also it adds additional requirements after they serve the registration period plus its unconstitutional . It amends the sentence added down and it has been proven with facts that the registries only bolster political gain and do nothing to protect its citizens it actually hurts the citizens and families A person registering at 18 and being done after 25 years with no other sex crimes how is he a danger toAnyone. ?

Name:	Michael Stolte
Comment:	HF 77 is an unjust poison pill. It is unnecessary, unconstitutional and unfair. No other category of exoffender in Iowa is subjected to anything close to the oppressive lifelong dehumanization that this bill would bring. Tiered registries are the national standard now that we are in the 21st century. You should instead advance real efforts in progress toward rehabilitation and civil restoration of all exoffenders in all categories.This observer sees no redeeming value, nor any genuine public safety interest, in this bill. It smacks of political pandering and vicious permanent retribution. Do not advance this misguided bill for any further consideration.
Name:	Maton Fillmore
Comment:	This is another terrible bill about so called sex offenders. You politicians have made the register useless. If you only put dangerous people on there it would make sense. But there's people on there in their 80s and 90s. Why lower my property value because some dude urinated in public? Do not pass this.
Name:	Mr Anonymous
Comment:	OPPOSE this awful idea:There is NO DATA set that indicates:1. That registration actually makes the community more safe2. That making persons register for life makes the community more safe.You have found a target population (which includes a WIDE VARIETY of actual offenses) that you can use as a scapegoat for increasingly harmful laws which do nothing but hurt individuals and families. In the event that you have a person who cannot be trusted in public, please keep them in jail. Otherwise, there is no legitimate reason to require ANY penalty beyond time served.
Name:	Tara Lee
Comment:	My family strongly opposes this bill. The registry is already a bloated expensive mess for taxpayers. It does not protect anyone as most offenses are committed by someone known to the family and NOT on the registry. Its a false sense of security and even those on it hardly ever reoffend with another sex offense. A persons sentence and punishment has to end at some point. This is is just crazy government overreach. And who will pay the bill when this gets challenged and overturned in court.the taxpayers. Your time could be better spent on things that actually effect Iowans.
Name:	Mark J.
Comment:	I am an Iowa native and I oppose this bill. Individuals who have completed their sentence and have been removed from the registry should not be required to reregister. The individuals have completed what the courts have said was required for their crime. This bill should not move forward.
Name:	tnt tnt
Comment:	Unconstitutional Once a person has served their time leave them alone. The registry destroys lives on entire families.
Name:	James Reed
Comment:	HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment. Registry is part of the sentenced imposed by a court. Only a court has the authority to place a person on the registry. RESPECT THE CONSTITUTION.
Name:	Andy Daly
Comment:	The registry in general harms children, which is a wellstudied fact. It does little to nothing to reduce new victims but puts men and women, and even youths, in a situation where they and their own children are ostracized from the community, making it harder for them to get jobs and places to live.Let me repeat, this bill AND

the registry as a whole HURTS CHILDREN.Do you care about the children of register citizens, who have a permanent target on their back often for convictions which took place before they were even born?The registry HARMS CHILDREN who live with registered citizens. That is a FACT. It doesn't prevent crime, it increases the likelihood of recidivism, which is actually low to being with, and puts CHILDREN at risk of vigilantism and insecure homes.VOTE AGAINST this bill and EVERY bill forcing children of registered citizens to have their home addresses plastered across the internet.

Name: S. T.

Comment: This is unlawful, unethical, and unfair to registrants and their families. The impact of registering goes so deep, all you have is hope for the day you no longer have to register. This removes all hope and the ability to lead a full life free from fear. Every human being deserves that. Once the punishment is served, it is done. Why would registrants be the exception? Higher level offenders have a higher punishment. There should not be a onesizefitsall approach if the crimes differ. Please do NOT pass this bill.Sincerely, the wife and family of a registrant

Name: KEVIN POWELL

Comment: I live in Indiana but I oppose. I was charged with a sex offense when I was a minor in Illinois. At the time I was told that I would be required to register for 10 after my release. After completing my sentence and parole in Illinois I moved to Indiana where I found out that I would have to register for life, even though it was a juvenile charge... With that being said, I strictly oppose imposing additional punishment to anyone who has already completed the original punishment ordered.

Name: tom a

Comment: I oppose this legislation. This bill is dehumanizing, not only to the persons subject to it, but also their families. Let people move on, Let people heal. This bill will restigmatize a group of people who are only trying to live their lives! As well as restigmatize their families. This bill would penalize and punish individuals who have done the right thing since making the worse decisions of their lives. This bill will penalize and punish law abiding citizens who at a point in their lives made horrible decisions, but now want nothing more than not create any new regrets in their lives. There comes a time when people should be removed from the registry.

Name: Michael Richards

Comment: While unable to attend this hearing, I too add my voice to the many in opposition of an unconstitutional and politically driven law. Press the delete button and move onto the peoples business

Name: Dustin McMillan

Comment: Proponents of this fiasco should be required to provide a detailed list of the names and specific sex crimes committed by former registrants that makes this proposal necessary, as well as an explanation of how reregistration of former registrants would have prevented such. Personally, I would be surprised if they could find two examples of the former. I know full well they cannot explain the latter.Not to mention the unconstitutionality and likelihood of this bill being struck down in court (along with the costs to the state to defend it) as mentioned in other comments.This bill serves absolutely no purpose whatsoever beyond political grandstanding by its author and fleecing a little money out of FORMER registrants and a lot of money from the federal government (intended for registry maintenance but probably won't be used for such, at least not in its entirety). At the very least, the bill's author should acknowledge that upon presentment rather than the typical, nonsensical, and consistently disproven claims that the sex offender registry and any attempts to modify it have anything to do with the protection of society and children.

Name: cm mato

Comment:	Ronald Pedersenyou dont know how right you are about an uprising and going Balastic due to certain lawmakers wanting to make a name for them selves using families and the lives of Childrens 'safety and well being just to monkey climb their the way to the top.it is bad enough now for the families and children of the registered person they are collateral damage and expendable in the eyes of certain lawmakers this registry does way more harm to children then it does good, and to think now they put children on the registry, the same registry that was suppose to protect them, how Ironic is that? and to top that 8yr old on the registry i there lives and well being that young knowing what their future holds for them, nothing. due to the fact the government dont belive in rehabilitation and support to give a new start to another human being. then what is going on now to much. the people who completed there registry term finally making a new come back in life starting over building a good reputation and home life and family and friends who belive in them and trust them only to have this bill destroy years of what it took to rebuild your life.the fact is its not the people on the registry reoffending and the stigma of Stranger Danger Noits law enforcement congressman teachers priest etc etc its on the TV its on the internet they try to enforce this registry and all along doing exactly what we are being accused of time and time again. It is such a shame to tell my 8 yr old daughter not to hug the teacher or other children or hold hand and please dont give a kiss of kindness or our government will deem you as sexual deviant what a statement to have to say to my child. its just shows her time and time again there is no love or kindness left in this world. I know myself that hold true my offense was underage dating, not by choice the female lied about her real age no punishment for her that was 33 yrs ago a mistake I paid for daily and still do Ive not reoffended any type of sex crime due to the fact that what had transpired in my case was a unknowing mistake. and I paid for that with a term on the registry and I have that letter stating they you are no longer required to register as a sex offender and you are not a risk to the public if my letter states that then how can these the lawmakers in Iowa now claim your a risk just sayin double edged sward
Name:	Chris Me
Comment:	HF77 is a bill that punishes people after they've paid their debts to society. The former registrants have proven that they don't pose a threat by being removed from the registry and become productive citizens. Yet, this bill would put all of them back in, very vindictive.
Name:	linda shedlock
Comment:	I strongly oppose this bill ! Once you have completed your requirements your time is served . Registration requirements only keep people in a job . This requirement does NOT allow a human being to repair their lives and move forward !They need to be able to become a community member and a human again . Labels do not allow this . These politicians have nothing better to do in life then to continue to ruin another human beings . Time served , you should become a human again !
Name:	Ben Krombach
Comment:	This bill is cruel and unusual punishment. Once completed, a sentence should not be renewed.
Name:	Dr. Don Atkins
Comment:	Go ahead! Amend a sentence already imposed by a court, genius.
Name:	Mike Wilson
Comment:	Hello, I don't understand what you are trying to solve here. We know that sex offenders that reoffend are less than 5% likely to do so. That is LESS than any other offense. We also know that those who DO offend are not on the registry, and those that do are already known to the victim: clergy, family members, or friends of the family. Also consider that those who have already paid there debt and then some

after their registration has expired is ex post facto punishment for those that have served their time. This is not only absurdly illogical, it is a form of vicious legal vigilantism. If you really want to curb sex offenses, consider making therapy more available for those who may be predisposed to it while educating the public on prevention.

Name:	Douglas Martinez
Comment:	Lifetime registration has been deemed unconstitutional by 18 courts12 federal and 6 stateand that isn't including the plethora of cases, both state and federal that have deemed the registry unconstitutional. To punish someone for life does nothing for public safety and empirical evidence has proven this time and again. Then you are voting to do this to those who no longer register?! now THAT is definitely anti American/Constitution.
Name:	Sylvia R
Comment:	I 100% strongly oppose this unconstitutional bill to yet again punish a group of ex offenders and also their family members, including children. It is barbaric and inhumane, and a complete violation of Human Rights. It is in everybody's interest to let ex offenders reintegrate into society once their sentence has been served.
Name:	Ebb Nelson
Comment:	This law is unfair, dehumanizing, isolating, unconstitutional, wasteful and obviously a political ploy. Those who have completed the entirety of their registration requirements (which in most cases is a decades long, arduous and often confusing process) should be allowed to move on and live a life without persecution. Registration is punishment restricting autonomy and domestic/international travel while also drastically reducing a registrants chances at attaining consistently safe work and housing. How the government has managed to label registration otherwise carries the stink of fear, ignorance and graft. I oppose this law.
Name:	Greg Ikerd
Comment:	I can't be at this meeting but I am against this bill passing
Name:	Sean Norton
Comment:	These individuals have paid their debt to society. This bill is not fair. The percentage of recidivism is around 2%. I oppose this strongly.
Name:	Ermioni Greinke
Comment:	Registration is already a cruel punishment for people that have served their time and paid their dues. All it does is hurt the registrants and their families. Their children suffer. Registration does not help or benefit anyone and that is a fact. It deters people who are really trying hard to be productive citizens. It is really mindboggling why anyone would think it is a good idea to have a registry. But to put people back on the registry after they have completed their time on the registry is absolutely horrendous!
Name:	Lisa Lillie
Comment:	When a registrant has served their term, complied with all registration requirements and their registryrequirement is fulfilled they should not have to "reregister". That is clearly punitive and not adminstrative.It is making all registrants "life time" regitrants. That is unacceptable and unconstitutional.
Name:	John Covert
Comment:	Many policy makers around the country are heeding the ample research that the registry simply does not protect the public, and in some ways actually lessens public safety, and are looking at ways to get individuals off it. This is certainly not the time for Iowa to support and expand it with this punitive and poorly thought out proposal. Please defeat it.

Name:	Ben Maurer
Comment:	Although some courts have ruled opposite, there is no way that these draconian rules and laws have anything to do with public safety and everything to do with continued prosecution and persecution.Quit making headlines and make better decisions. Make smart laws that truly protect our citizens and children.
Name:	Paul Weiss
Comment:	Are we trying to force people who have completed their sentences to be punished a second time? I guess thats the United States today. Who cares about civil rights? Big government is taking over!
Name:	BROOKS STENSTROM
Comment:	This is out of tune and out of touch Neanderthal thinking. THIS IS TOTALLY WRONG
Name:	Brianna Fields
Comment:	I strongly oppose this bill. This could possibly be an extreme case of the punishment, but DEFINITELY should not be our goto reprimand.
Name:	kevin pez
Comment:	I oppose HF 77.HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment.This bill is an emotionbased solution looking for a problem.It is unconstitutional. Iowa cannot amend a sentence already imposed by a court.It damages the families of registrants, including their children.This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.This bill dehumanizes registrants.No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.Please vote NO on HF 77.Thank you!!
Name:	Danyelle Carlysle
Comment:	Individuals that have been removed from the registry should remain off the registry. This is adding punishment after time has been served. Let people move on with thier lives and to become productive citizens.
Name:	Tom X
Comment:	This is wrong Plain Wrong. Ex Post Facto Cruel and Unusual Punishment. These individuals have served their sentence completed their Requirements only to met years later with a continued punishment.
Name:	Tami Floyd
Comment:	This is just so wrong These individuals have done their time, paid their dues, completed their sentence and serve their registry time. They should not have to reregister. Once they are done. This is barbaric.
Name:	Gail Liedtke
Comment:	I am in opposition to HF77, a bill to modify the sex offender registry requirements by requiring sex offenders whose registration requirements have expired to reregister. This bill is unconstitutional! These people have paid their price for their crimes. Extensive research shows that registries do nothing to keep communities safer, thus proving they serve no purpose other than to perpetually punish offenders. No other crimes are treated this way. Registries are a huge waste of taxpayer money. Money that can be better spent in education and prevention of sex crimes.These offenders deserve to have every chance to reintegrate back into society and make a future for themselves. When is the punishment going to end? Enough is enough say "no" to HF77!!!
Name:	Jared K
Comment:	A lifetime of punishment after someone has paid their debt to society is cruel and

unnecessary. What are you thinking, Iowa? I oppose this bill!

Name:	Bill Cockerham
Comment:	I oppose bill. These are people who have completed their sentence and paid for their bad choices.
Name:	Kim Avery
Comment:	HF77 is immoral and unconstitutional. This is a cruel form of double jeopardy that causes great damage to registrants and their families. This bill is not based on the factual data about recidivism among registrants, the vast majority of whom cause no threat to society, but an emotionbased response based on false assumptions. There is no other crime, no matter how violent, that is treated with this kind of endless punishment and there is no justification for it.
Name:	Don Ray
Comment:	This is insane its gotta be double Jeopardy. Leave these people alone they serve their time paid the debt to society leave them alone.
Name:	Damien S. Davis
Comment:	I oppose this legislation!
Name:	Jeremy Zier
Comment:	I oppose this unconstitutional legislation. This amounts to double jeopardy, and adding punitive measures after the fact is deplorable. If you pay your debt to society, then that's it. Stop creating legislation that panders for votes. Do better!
Name:	Rev Mark Bolton
Comment:	Please be kind to penitent folk. HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment. Let's all treat each other respectfully to build a healthier community. Healthier and safer for all.
Name:	Katie Wood
Comment:	I strongly oppose this bill for many reasons. The fact that it is unconstitutional alone should be reason enough to stop the proposed bill immediately, no matter what your personal view on the topic is. Ex post facto laws are forbidden according to Article 1 of the United States Constitution. Period. To say that this particular group of people warrants being the exception is preposterous. The registry as it stands NOW is unethical and unconstitutional, the fact that adding more to it is even being considered is frightening.
Name:	David Kamen
Comment:	The requirement towards forcing offenders to continuously register and reregister is NOT necessary. Once someone registers they remain on the register until discharged. Requiring repeated registrations is an unnecessary hardship on too many oeople
Name:	Eric Standefer
Comment:	The public registry creates grave hardship for those people. They are discriminated , harassed, and exploited making it very difficult to assimilate into society. States should be removing registry requirements not increasing them.
Name:	RONALD SAMPSON
Comment:	This is insane and unconstitutional!! If this was risk based and not conviction based you may have a shot at passing this. All these resources for this registry but it is doing no good. Sex crimes nation wide have not been reduced one bit and its been well documented that the recidivism rate for sex offenders does not warrant this crazy modernday witch hunt!!!
Name:	Lauren Aguilera

Comment:	HF77 is cruel and an un constitutional punishment.
Name:	M Proud
Comment:	I oppose this bill. As and adult who experienced sexual harm as a child I do not appreciate my experiences being used as an excuse to harm others. Have you spoken with those who are on the registry? To their children? To those of us who have been harmed, who want money, time and effort put into actual rehabilitation and education instead of wasting it a proven method that does nothing? It is so easy to pass an emotionally charged bill to score a point than to look at the registered family and tell them you are about to continue to tear them apart for no reason. Please take the time to know the facts. Then you will see this is the absolute worst thing you could do on this issue as all you would be doing is selling a lie to the public, which will cause harm. Please consider a no vote. Thank you.
Name:	Steffan Carroll
Comment:	Does this law apply to the formerly registered from other states? If so then I won't be able to move in with my kids in ten years when I'm 82. Bummer.
Name:	Steffan Carroll
Comment:	I asked Chat.GPT at chat.openai.com/chat this question:Explain why a bill for an act modifying sex offender registry requirements by requiring sex offenders whose registration requirements have expired to reregister, and making penalties applicable is bad public policy.THE RESPONSEThere are several reasons why a bill requiring expired sex offenders to reregister and imposing penalties for noncompliance could be considered bad public policy:1. Lack of evidence of effectiveness: Requiring sex offenders to reregister, even if their registration requirements have expired, may not actually improve public safety or reduce recidivism. There is limited evidence to support the efficacy of sex offender registries in achieving these goals.2. Unnecessary burden on law enforcement: Reregistering a large number of expired sex offenders could put a strain on law enforcement resources and divert attention from other important tasks.3. Harsh penalties for noncompliance: Imposing severe penalties for noncompliance with the registry requirements, such as imprisonment, could lead to unintended consequences, such as making it more difficult for sex offenders to reintegrate into society and find employment.4. Lack of individualized assessment: Requiring all expired sex offenders to reregister regardless of their current risk level fails to take into account the individualized circumstances of each offender and could result in a onesizefitsall approach that is not effective in promoting public safety.5. Impact on rehabilitation and reentry: The requirement to reregister and the potential penalties for noncompliance could create additional barriers to rehabilitation and reentry for sex offenders, making it more difficult for them to lead productive lives and reducing the chances of their successful integration into society.In conclusion, modifying sex offender registry requirements by requiring expired sex offenders to reregister and imposing penalties for noncompliance could be considered bad public policy due to a lack of evidence of its effectiveness, unnecessary burden on law enforcement, harsh penalties for noncompliance, lack of individualized assessment, and impact on rehabilitation and reentry.
Name:	April Losh
Comment:	I want to voice my opposition to this bill. This legislation is founded in ignorance and fearbased at it's very core. Not only do sex offenders have the lowest recidivism rate (repeat offense rate) of any criminal act, but sex offenders have stricter laws than convicted murderers in our nation. Once a sentence is served and all requirements are met, to try to impose an additional sentence or restrictions would appear to be unfair and uneducated bias as well as the equivalent to double jeopardy. It is essentially trying the accused all over again. If we pass this legislation, perhaps we should just pass laws saying that once guilty, always guilty, and that all criminals get life sentences with no possibility of parole, because that is what you are doing in

discriminating against one group of people.

Name:	Sondra P
Comment:	Laws regarding the registry have grown out of proportion and have long passed the time when it was deemed civil and regulatory, when in person registration was not deemed punishment. We are way past only in person registration. Now we have Internet limitations, presence and residency restriction, travel restrictions, compliance checks, etc. It is way passed the once deemed non punitive nature. The registry is punishment, and having people to reregister is a double whammy and a clear kick in the gut. I oppose this bill and any bill that harms registrants and their entire families. In addition, registries put children in danger as people let their guards down, knowing where a registrant lives, yet they don't know if the next door neighbor runs a meth lab, has multiple DUIs, is an ex murderer or robber. People feel safe when all they should do is use common sense. Sex Offenders are the least likely to reoffend, so why oust them and ignore more dangerous criminals at the same time. Abolish the registry, focus on crime prevention and rehabilitation, and you will have a much safer world. Follow what the rest of the world does US! Let's stop being the laughing stock of the entire civilized world.
Name:	Kathleen Turner
Comment:	HF 77 is cruel and unusual punishment. It damages the families of registrants, including their children. A person should not be punished their entire life.
Name:	Maura Lin
Comment:	It is absolutely unconscionable to require any registrant to reregister. Even if the registry was an effective or ethical, fair, and humane law (which it is NOT), anyone having to reregister should be subject to DUE PROCESS first. The registry is ALREADY a violation of civil rights. Believe that people can move forward, change for the better, and offer them the opportunity to do so. That is the foundation of humanity, goodness, and a truly Christianbased ethic!
Name:	Maura Lin
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Name:	jack auping
Comment:	This was not thought out at all,inhumane and unconstitutional stop this bill now!
Name:	John Weston
Comment:	OPPOSED. No other crime in history has a never ending tail of destruction. This is akin to public shaming. If you've done a crime and have done your time you should be done period. You shouldn't have to remain a pariah to the whole world forever. Contrary to all the hype and false reporting, sex offenders are LEAST LIKELY TO RECIDIVATE.Enough is enough, it's time to stop violating Civil Rights under the false guise of "public safety".
Name:	Steve Dillon
Comment:	HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment.This bill is an emotionbased solution looking for a problem.It is unconstitutional. Iowa cannot amend a sentence already imposed by a court.It damages the families of registrants, including their children.This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.This bill dehumanizes registrants.No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.There are no gangs of registrants roaming the streets.please vote against this bill.

Name:	Lynn Mcgovern
Comment:	This bill is unconstitutional and damages the registrants, their families and their children.
Name:	Laurie Kepros
Comment:	Once someone has lived in the community without sexually reoffending for 20 years even the highest risk individuals have an actuarial risk level that is lower than someone with no history of a sexual conviction. Please stop wasting resources on this safety theater and instead invest in prevention and helping survivors of sexual abuse heal and end the cycle of violence.
Name:	Dixie Wodell
Comment:	Once a person has paid their penalty, it's unjust to make them reinstate registry requirements.
Name:	Anthony Deel
Comment:	I am opposed to this bill that Unconstitutionally compels former Registrants to reregister beyond the court mandated order. It is wrong to circumvent the law to amend a sentence already imposed by the courts. Similarly, the new SORNA rule imposed by DOJ has already been blocked in a California court because it has violated due process and the first Amendment creating precedent for future cases in regard to force registration beyond the sentencing of the former registrant. This cant be anymore unamerican. People have served there sentences and paid there debt ,DO NOT PASS HF77 !!
Name:	Dixie Wodell
Comment:	I AM IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO THIS BILL. Please, vote no.
Name:	Heather Wagner
Comment:	I oppose HF77 as it's unconstitutional, inhumane, and a waste of taxpayers money! Address mental health and sex addition publicly, like in the country of Germany, instead of giving Iowans a false sense of security, when data shows sex offenses to be the LOWEST crime to reoffend. As a rape by gunpoint survivor, married to a man molested by 4 family members, with us both battling a sex addiction from our trauma, PLEASE reappropriate Iowan's tax dollars into helping those battling a sex addition and its root cause. That's where our government needs to start, as a model state in the U.S. to finally acknowledge and be willing to openly discuss this taboo topic, which happens to be the fastest rising crime. A public registry is useless, does NOT make society safer, with factual basis to prove its ineffectiveness. When is enough enough? When does redemption begin?Volunteer advocate for: FAMM, Women Against Registry (WAR), ACSOL, NARSOL and President of Iowans Unafraid
Name:	Thomas Karvitz
Comment:	There are no other offenses in any penal codes that force a person to continue to be punished, in any way, after they have served all of their courtordered requirements.It is time for this witch hunt to stop Sex Offenders from being punished over and over and over. This is not the way our laws work!
Name:	Kirsten Salomon
Comment:	This is an inhumane and ineffective political response to a problem that does not exist. There is NO validity to the myth that registries prevent future offenses. This is NOTHING but a political ploy to try to appear to do something about a problem that has nothing to do with keeping people on the registry! We do not require this kind of intrusion for ANY other crime including murder. Shame on you authors of H F77.

Name:	Kyle R
Comment:	Clearly this is meant to chastise, berate and degrade those that have have already paid for their offenses, AGAIN. I fail to see any benefit from HF77 and so I oppose HF77.
Name:	Kirsten Salomon
Comment:	This is an inhumane and ineffective political response to a problem that does not exist. Countless studies have categorically proven that registries do not protect against further offensesin fact 95% of new offenses are committed by people never on the registry. To make this even more egregious, this is an attempt to punish people who have served their time. We do not do this for ANY OTHER offense, including murder! This is nothing but a political ploy to garner favor with an uninformed public! Shame on you Iowa legislators behind this proposal!
Name:	Israel O Estrada
Comment:	HF77 represents a brutal and inhumane form of punishment that contravenes the Constitution and harms the families, including minors, of those listed as registrants. This legislation is driven by emotions rather than evidence and dehumanizes registrants by suggesting that they can never rehabilitate themselves. The unjust treatment of registrants differently from other perpetrators of violent crimes, without credible justification, is unacceptable.
Name:	A N
Comment:	I oppose this bill. This serves zero purpose especially after someone has served their time and completed any other requirements. This bill does not make the community safer or prevent any further crimes. Stop criminalizing things that arent crimes such as this bill that creates reregistering for the sex offender registry a crime. Our prison systems already are over capacity, so this makes zero sense to create something out nothing to just create more mass incarceration.
Name:	Norman Wodell
Comment:	I am opposed to automatically extending registry. This means a life sentence this class of crime. At a minimum, there must be a process to PROVE a continuing threat to society. The justice system should mandate that as part of the original sentence, a behavior remediation be conducted.
Name:	Shannon Anderson
Comment:	I sit and wonder how humans can even make this kind of decision? I'm appalled! I, 100%, oppose this bill. Address the real issues that keep being swept under the table because society can't handle the truth. Society turns their backs on the people that need them the most. We have a mental health issue and we are ignoring it! I am shouting a very loud NO to this bill! Fix our system instead so loved ones can get the help they truly need.
Name:	A K
Comment:	It is really unfortunate that we continue to see such potential draconian bills such as this one being pushed. You would think that at this juncture of the 21st century that our society would have evolved as human beings when it comes to giving people a second chance in life. It is very unfortunate that we continue to have certain individuals who continue to demonize human beings such as registrants who have paid their debts to society. Our Lord Jesus Christ preached that not forgiving are fellow man is an absolute sin in life, yet these certain individuals who attempt to push such heinous bills are committing sins against God. I ask that you act like human beings and vote no on this despicable bill. Thank you!
Name:	Christopher Brown

Comment:	If there are any lawmakers with any guts and fact based practice, then they should oppose this bill. This is not a solution. The registry has never prevented a crime. Period. It is a colossal waste of money and time.
Name:	David Heeren
Comment:	This Bill is, unfortunately, based in ignorance and hate. Iowa is better than this. Please examine current scientific literature and testimony of experts in this arena. Some basic facts:Registration IS punishment. SCOTUS, in 2003, was lazy, unprofessional, uninformed and biased. Registration does NOT prevent reoffense. Registration is EXPENSIVE. Registration is UNNECESSARY. WWJD? He would NOT impose additional registration. Registration does NOT equal Love!Please consider this bill with an open mind considering facts, academic literature and testimony by the vast majority of professionals. You will be convinced to VOTE NO on this bill. Thank you!
Name:	Richard Dozier
Comment:	I am dismayed that the State of Iowa, the state where I grew up, is contemplating a law so completely without a rational basis. After several decades of sex offender registries throughout the United States, what is known, overwhelmingly, about people placed on those registries is that people change and that their capacity to reoffend dramatically diminishes over time. Sex offenders have the lowest recidivism rates among all offenders and this rate drops dramatically after five years and even more dramatically after ten years. Your registry has been, until now, remarkably attuned to this reality and it is a shame that you now are inclining towards making it out of touch with what we now know about registries and rehabilitation.I urge you not to enact this law.
Name:	Trevor White
Comment:	This bill is a frivolous waste of public resources and time. Further, HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment.This bill is an emotionbased solution looking for a problem.It is unconstitutional. Iowa cannot amend a sentence already imposed by a court.It damages the families of registrants, including their children.This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.This bill dehumanizes registrants.No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.There are no gangs of registrants roaming the streets.
Name:	Ruben Herrera
Comment:	I oppose bill HF77It is cruel!!!!
Name:	David Kennerly
Comment:	Well, whatever you think about the merits of this proposed law (and I think they're terrible) you need to be aware of the enormous legal challenge you face were it to become law. The State of Iowa will be embroiled in a courtroom battle that is doomed to failure because this is clearly a violation of ex post facto legal principles in both spirit and jurisprudence. You may think you're on solid ground with the Smith v. Doe ruling but you will find that fewer and fewer federal judges are willing to extend that increasingly shakey arbor of protection to cases such as this that clearly were not anticipated by Smith's very narrowly construed SCOTUS decision several decades ago. In other words, get ready for the battle of your careers. Your reputations may well rest upon the outcome.
Name:	Kathleen Garner
Comment:	I strongly oppose this bill. No other crime requires a person to be punished a second time for the same crime! And do not say this is not punishment! Research consistently finds that the Registry does not accomplish what it was touted to do. To continue to find new ways to keep anyone unfortunate enough to be registered from living a normal life can only be called punishment.

Name:	James Wood
Comment:	This type of ignorance will continue until everyone realizes that not all sex offenses are the same,there has to be a separation from hands on victims and no hands on victims.There is a difference.I can't afford paying for sexual history polygraphs until I die.50.00 for the polygraph and 25.00 for gas.Not to mention 35.00 for a monitor on my cellphone. And these people contacted me over an adult dating site. I thought it was an adult because they never told me they were underage. We have serious problems and this bill HF77 should be called after the puritans,#1692.Its time to file lawsuits against the state of iowa,the D.O.J.and probation.Sitting around and do nothing but whine and complain will achieve nothing.We need to find lawyers who will help fight this injustice.I can't afford to do anything as it is.Talk to as many lawyers as possible and ask for their time in helping us fight this type of discrimination that runs rampant nationally and in this backward thinking state of iowa.This is how bad this system is,I will be homeless in a couple of months.pro suggested that I go back to the halfway house. Are you kidding me,that's going back towards prison not going forward living my life like a normal person and not being babysitted by the state.If this bill passes it will be the beginning of the end for the labeled group of people called sex offenders.The words Sex offender when there was no sex involved.sick people.
Name:	0 0
Comment:	ONLY NAZIS SUPPORT JEW LISTS U NAZIS GO SUCK HITLERS DICK U NAZIS
Name:	0 0
Comment:	NAZIS U ARE NAZIS SUCK HITLERS DICK U NAZIS
Name:	Edward M
Comment:	I strongly oppose this bill. It is overkill and unconstitutional. It will impose a punishment similar to a "Life Sentence" on citizens unjustly, when the State Sentencing matrix doesn't legally call for that length of punishment. Registered offenders are still Citizens protected by the U. S. Constitution.
Name:	Rachel Pacey
Comment:	As someone who is walking this walk right now and in the process of going back to school for social work I am totally against this . The registry in its entire is wrong . Once a person does their time that should be it m I'd their is probation after towards with certain limitations that's one thing but even the limitations on doing time and then being placed on parole is nothing but trip wires and red tape. The registry we will not as not not help protect anyone . If a predator wants to commit a child affense crime they will and no registry will stop them . Most SO never reoffend . Only like 4%. Their is enough sex offenders rules laws and regulations enough is enough . These people are still humans. If someone's time had expird that means they are a low risk SO to behin with done all the red tape did their time and have the chance most of the registry don't have to have a normal productive life which is what eveyone on the registry should have but few will ever have again becasue this destroyed the life's not just of the offender but the families as well .
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enough . These people are still humans. If someone's time had expird that means they are a low risk SO to begin with done all the red tape did their time and have the chance most of the registry don't have to have a normal productive life which is what eveyone on the registry should have but few will ever have again becasue this destroyed the life's not just of the offender but the families as well . I could go on and on but No no no against this all the way .

Name: Jason W

Comment: I do not support this bill! Iowa should be working to remove the registry entirely, not expand on it by imposing additional penalties on people who have paid their debt to society. Multiple studies, some of which have been pointed out in other comments, have demonstrated that registries dont do anything but serve as political, performative theater. They dont decrease risk in the community since the overwhelming majority of sex offenses are committed by first time offenders. They simply serve to satisfy a lust for punishment. But its the state thats doing the harm when theres a registry. Family members and other loved ones as well as the individuals themselves who have recommitted to living honorable lives are used as scapegoats for society that doesnt want to deal with the hard work of true prevention and healing. Registries are a failed social experiment. Collectively, we didnt know that when they became more prevalent in the 1990s and before the internet, but we know now. History will not look kindly on states that behave so irresponsibly.

Name: T Person

Comment: These type of bills are fear based and have no true educational backing. They hurt not only people that have served their sentences but their families as well, including the children of the offenders. I know this from personal experience. It's time to stop allowing officials who seek to be elected or reelected to use the public fear that has been produced by inaccurate information as a tool. All these bills and laws that make someone register after their sentence has been served for the crime is unconstitutional.

Name: Bryan Moll

Comment: I strongly oppose this bill. It violates the US Constitution prohibiting application of ex post facto laws. A person who has completed his or her sentence, and completed the required time to register must be allowed to move on with hos or her life like any other person who has been convicted of a crime. Laws like this proposed bill do nothing but stir up fear in the public by stigmatizing registrants in that the public is made to believe that all registrants are dangerous, violent, or just waiting for an opportunity to abduct and assault a child. This is blatantly false. The vast majority of registrants want nothing more than to be able to reintegrate back into society and to become productive members of their communities. Laws like this proposed bill prevent registrants from living a meaningful and productive life, thus increasing recidivism. No other group of offenders are treated like a registrant. There are no laws like this for people convicted of drunk driving, drug dealing, gun crimes, or murder, yet people convicted of other crimes are given many opportunities to better their lives once their sentence is complete.I urge you to vote NO on this bill.

Name: Tami Smith

Comment: I oppose this law. The laws need to be changed but, for the better. No one deserves a life sentence after serving their court given time. My Son got 14 years in a Federal prison for looking at 20 pictures on his cell phone and sending them to a friend. First offense. We need reform and consulting not prison or these insane laws. It's easy money for you all.

Name: Tennille Smith

Comment: Please, do not pass this. These are PEOPLE who have already served their time. This bill will only prolong their punishment, and make it harder for them and their

families to move on with their lives.

Name:	B Melissa
Comment:	This law if passed, is unconstitutional. The laws surrounding those charged with sex offenses violate constitutional rights of citizens who have already served their time, it puts not only them, but their families at risk and danger. This must be stopped!
Name:	cm mato
Comment:	this bill is and will still fall under SORNA either way this IV tier to be something like privateonly can be found if you call the LEOs dept I belive... guess again.INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL even if your tiered IV on a registry that is not public when you go to LEOs office to report your travel, take a wild guess who they report that too?SORNA (SMART OFFICE) yes the same national registry that this bill is trying to claim youwont appear on publicly!!!! cause for Iowa to be compliant they have to report all international travel this bill will give a loophole to SORNA trying to Back door putting ppl on national registry KILL THE BILL
Name:	Sean Thomsen
Comment:	I have done my time for the past 22 years for something that did not even occur but felt somewhat compelled to accept a plea bargain that was suppose to maintain my freedom and expire and be done in ten years...some freedom!!A murderer has more rights than people in my position does on any given day
Name:	Nancy Miller
Comment:	I will plan to attend this meeting to show my opposition to this proposed bill.
Name:	Allen Sauer
Comment:	People with expunged records or got deferred judgment should not have to register at all the people that get that are being charge for it again and it not fare for people that getting charged for a crime that surpose to be erase from there records has to register for no reason and that is not a second chance of life
Name:	Susan Leedom
Comment:	I can not be there in person but I wish to voice my opposition to this bill.
Name:	James Brown
Comment:	I oppose this legislation. It boggles the mind to think that after someone completes their prison sentence and then completes their obligation to the registry that they then would have to reregister again for another term. I am not sure what purpose this serves other than retribution. I don't see what civil protective outcome this legislation would achieve. This legislation is purely punitive and vindictive. It says that there is no redemption in Iowa.
Name:	Rev Rich Hendricks
Comment:	This is just plain wrong. An example of grandstanding claiming to fix a "problem" that does not exist. Christians especially ought to believe in the capacity of people to change, of clean slates and of fairness. This bill is the opposite of all those things.
Name:	Tena Verhoef
Comment:	I am opposed to this bill. I thought that once tried you could not be tried again. Isnt this the exact same thing as double jeopardy? This bill seems merely punitive and pushes fear instead of facts.
Name:	Derek Logue
Comment:	Iowa should not behave like Florida. This is a blatantly unconstitutional law. Passing it will be a costly mistake. Iowa will be sued into oblivion and you will lose. The

Feds have already been blocked by a federal court for trying to compel registration where registration is no longer required:https://reason.com/2023/01/19/afederaljudgesaysthedojssexoffenderregistrationrulesviolatedueprocessbyrequiringtheimpossible/

Name: jeramie reazer

Comment: i cannot attend this meeting but would like to submit my opposition to this bill. sex offenders have done their given sentences.how can you repunish people who are trying to be productive citizens. bilss and laws are too extreme and further alienate people who are trying and doing the right things.

Name: Dylan Schares

Comment: I oppose this bill as this is a form of double jeopardy, being punished more then once for a crime is a fifth amendment revocation and is illegal in federal court, not only is it already bad enough that one's life is no longer private due to info being found about one's life online but to traumatize a person who has fulfilled there duties/sentence that are successfully removed from the S.O.R. shouldn't have to reregister unless proven guilty after committing another criminal act that would be of the same type of nature of crime in which would constitute the requirement of the necessity of registering and a serial offender.

Name: cm Mato

Comment: to state my thoughts I have a 8 yr old daughter Im raising alone with will destroy any typeof events of schools parks , thus as well 18 yr of rebuilding my reputation and a good personand involved in the community.the 10/25/life was what we have done we served our time and paid our duesths is clearly double jeopardy and D Logue is totally correct This is a blatantly unconstitutional law. Passing it will be a costly mistake. Iowa will be sued into oblivion and you will lose. The Feds have already been blocked by a federal court for trying to compel registration where registration is no longerrequired:https://reason.com/2023/01/19/afederaljudgesaysthedojssexoffenderregistrationrulesviolatedueprocessbyrequiringtheimpossible/

Name: James Wood

Comment: This is out of tune and out of touch Neanderthal thinking. We are going back in time to when the puritans were in control.This illegal bill should be called #1692

Name: cm mato

Comment: siting back again taking all this in..we people have done our time REQUIRED by law.. we have made a new life for ourselves and our spouses and children,, yet the children will be the ones in this bill that will pay the price with the shame with abuse by other children, taking beatings every day after school, Ive seen it personally,Then have there Lives threaten and to live in fear due to the vigilantes who will try to take actions against the registered person, by vandalism or house fires or gunshots ring out only to kill and incent child of a registered person by passing this kind of bill. (proven In Florida) children are the victims of of the state and US government with unconstitutional laws It will be the incent child that could be killed or maimed for the rest of there life's leaving deep physically and mentally scared to deal with along with the PTSD that will go hand and hand every time a child steps out the door. This has been proven over the yrs with people who have children and on this registry this Bill" Fisher wants to present DONT PROTECT THE CHILDREN in fact it will cause more harm and putting childrens lives in danger, and when these children do get harmed or maimed the recourse is to put the liability on top of the people presenting such bills such as civil and punitive and monetary damages as they knew the outcome but dont care about childrens lives all they care about is making a name for them selves climbing the government ladder on the backs of children and there families Just sayin time we change things and make the Lawmakers responsible for

there actions of directly or indirectly putting children in harms way knowing ahead of time and knowing well children will be the ones who pay the price

Name:	James Wood

Comment: These legislatures need to take sexual history polygraphs. "Who ever cries wolf the loudest is probably the wolf themselfs,it's not a 100 percent quarantee but it is a 85 percent probability" we need a few hundred people to protest outside these peoples homes.lets see how they like the attention and there lives are no longer private.

Name: Jocelyn Meinders

Comment: If people are off the registry and have not reoffended, what would be the purpose in forcing them to reregister? The sex offender is the only crime where a person pays for their crime over and over again even after going through the rehabilitation process, serving prison time, and showing that they are not a danger. I strongly oppose this bill people deserve an opportunity to show they can change and move on from their past.

Name: Heather Wickersham

Comment: Hello, I am a family member opposed to this bill. We are making it harder and harder for people to reenter society and become productive members again. Instead we are trying to keep them locked up costing more to the tax payers. Let's please help offenders be a part of society and not outcastes costing more to the tax payer s

Name: Shane Jeansonne

Comment: The Idaho state legislature has no business in amending a sentence already imposed by a court, either state or federal, for the sole purpose of furthering their discriminatory tactics against an entire class of people. Ex post facto laws are prohibited by the Constitution. U. S. Const. Article I, Section 10, Clause 1:No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.An ex post facto law is a law that imposes criminal liability or increases criminal punishment retroactively. Two separate clauses of the Constitution, Article I, Sections 9 and 10, ban enactment of ex post facto laws by the Federal Government and the states, respectively. The Supreme Court has cited cases interpreting the federal Ex Post Facto Clause in challenges under the state clause, and vice versa, treating the two clauses as having the same scope. The Courts decisions interpreting both clauses are therefore discussed collectively in greater detail in the Article I, Section 9 essays on the federal Ex Post Facto Clause. In particular, those essays on federal and state ex post facto laws discuss Supreme Court jurisprudence addressing imposing or increasing punishments, procedural changes, employment qualifications, retroactive taxes, inapplicability to judicial decisions, and deportation and related issues.The Supreme Court has interpreted the Ex Post Facto Clauses to limit only legislation that is criminal or penal in nature, though the Court has also made clear that the ex post facto effect of a law cannot be evaded by giving a civil form to that which is essentially criminal. In addition, the Court has uniformly applied the prohibition on ex post facto legislation only to laws that operate retroactively. In the 1798 case Calder v. Bull, the Court enumerated four ways in which a legislature may violate the Ex Post Facto Clauses prohibition on imposing retroactive criminal liability: (1) making criminal an action taken before enactment of the law that was lawful when it was done; (2) increasing the severity of an offense after it was committed; (3) increasing the punishment for a crime after it was committed; and (4) altering the rules of evidence after an offense was committed so that it is easier to convict an offender. The Ex Post Facto Clauses are related to other constitutional provisions that limit retroactive government action, including the federal and state Bill of Attainder Clauses, the Contract Clause, and the Due Process Clauses.Source:

Name:	Jonathan Grund
Comment:	Registration is a 2nd punishment for those who have already serve a sentence behind bars. This bill will tack on yet further punishment with a 3rd sentence; having to reregister after their original registration had been served. This is deplorable, heartless, and unconstitutional.
Name:	James Wood
Comment:	Everyone needs to contact senator Ernst and let her know your opposition to this insane out of touch and out of tune bill. Senator Grassley doesn't give a damn about felon or convicts, he won't help. Infact he would probably jump on board with this bill. My live is destroyed as it is.
Name:	Vaughn Miller
Comment:	There's no good and clear reason for this bill.
Name:	Bruce Hossfield
Comment:	I am unable to attend this meeting but I would like to express my opposition to this bill. Forcing people who have successfully served their duty on Iowa's registry to reregister for the duration of their lifetimes is cruel and vindictive and accomplishes nothing. Nationwide studies show that: (1) 95% of all sexual offenses are committed by first time offenders. In other words, the registry is virtually useless as a law enforcement tool. Besides, you've got my DNA forever whether you force me back on the registry or not, so feel free to use that to rule me out as a suspect.(2) 95% of all sexual offenses are committed by persons known to the victims. In other words, the registry is virtually useless as a law enforcement tool. Please go interview real suspects instead of treating me as an automatic suspect which I am not.(3) 95% of all persons convicted of a sexual offense never commit another sexual offense ever. In other words, the registry is virtually useless as a law enforcement tool. Also, 95% of those 5% who do reoffend do so during their first 5 years, while still on the registry as it exists today. I ask that you stop wasting taxpayers time and money on this cruel, vindictive and useless legislation.
Name:	Nate Rinken
Comment:	Kill the Bill opposedIt is unconstitutional! Why?1) It gives citizens NO avenue off of it.(States recently challenged and lost California and South Carolina)2) It will drag thousands more back on to the registry bloating the system.3) It will cost the state more money to implement it.4) Statistics show the more you age the less chance of recidivism.5) There is no evidence registries accomplish safety in the first place.6) It does not follow the federal Adam Walsh act/guidelines. 7) There is no due process, in other words, the state has to show that there is a legitimate safety concern to bring anyone person back on the registry. It is now the states burden.8) This would be deemed expostfacto, meaning the government is adding punishment/punitive measures after the crime has been adjudicated.States around the country being challenged and are losing. Michigan along with several other states have already declared their state statues unconstitutional. Is Iowa willing to take that chance and waste tax payer funds for something that hasnt been proven to even work?
Name:	Janice Bellucci
Comment:	People who have been removed from the registry should stay off of the registry for the rest of their lives until and unless they commit another sex offense which is unlikely to happen. Despite media accounts, the rate of reoffense for a person convicted of a sex offense is less than 1 percent while on parole or probation and about 5 percent over their lifetime. In addition, according to international expert Karl Hansen, if a person has been in the community for 17 years and not committed a

subsequent sex offense, then they will not reoffend.

Name:	Cheri Antillon
Comment:	HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment.This bill is an emotionbased solution looking for a problem.It is unconstitutional. Iowa cannot amend a sentence already imposed by a court.It damages the families of registrants, including their children.This bill clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.This bill dehumanizes registrants.No other category of crime, however violent, is treated this way.There are no gangs of registrants roaming the streets.The good men and women of our country deserve to be free of an unconstitional law when they have already done the requirements by law. This bill is HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment !Please DO NOT PASS THIS UNFAIR AND CRUEL BILL!
Name:	Steve Bloch
Comment:	This proposed law is cruel, unconstitutional and will cost the taxpayers of Iowa millions once it ends up on court. This law makes sense only for repeat offenders.
Name:	Bo Duke
Comment:	At what point do people get to put their past behind them? Not all on the registry are predators. In fact, its a minority. Some would very much like to move on a repair their lives and relationships. Some of the laws being passed are just punitive and cruel. The laws of the states more than adequately punish and humiliate these people. I ask you to stop this bill and let people mend their lives. Isnt that what we hope happens to an individual whos done wrong? That the rehabilitate? Let them.
Name:	Deanna Foster
Comment:	I was absolutely floored when I read about this bill. I vehemently oppose it. I have always thought of Ohio as a very downtoearth, reasonable and thoughtful state and am therefore completely baffled that Ohio would consider a bill like this continuing to shame and punish your own people who only wish to move on and become productive, tax paying citizens. There are many studies that indicate the registry is ineffective, and not a good use of tax dollars. It is for all practical purposes about vengeance and public shaming, and not safety. The registry is a very punitive scheme bringing practically no value to society other than to inspire unnecessary fear in the citizenry and ultimately harm the families of registrants. Yes, there are families including children impacted by having a family member on a public registry.Continuing to inflict punishment on someone for their entire lives doesn't seem like something a rational and compassionate government would do. I hope you will reconsider this bill.
Name:	bruce wally
Comment:	I thought you people where for freedoms you going to mandate a certain part of the public to keep coming back to review there status after they cleared there name and just started to feel good about themselves, repubs the party of civil freedoms dont mandate shots party its my body and dont tell me to inject vaccines you are the hypocrites party, if you pass this bill you must do it to all people that complete jail and parole and make them come back for reviews or be subject to penalty , they must relive their past shame on you , you put these people on the unconstitutional registry only to find them selves job less home less cant be with family members and attend school functions even GOD forgave if you believe in that kind of thing Im sure you know all the obsiticals registrants go though yet you want to keep shaming WHY I ask,
Name:	Mona Manley
Comment:	HF77 is cruel and unusual punishment this bill will damage the famines of the registrants including their children. Also implies that registrants can't be redeem. Registrants should also be given a SECOND CHANCE

Name:	Fred Kreusch
Comment:	I am here to voice my concern regarding Bill HF77:HF77 is a cruel and unusual punishment and it clearly implies that registrants will never be allowed to be redeemed.
Name:	Judy Cockerham
Comment:	re HF77: Please bring some clarity and humanity to this bill and do not pass it. Persons who have paid the price and completed the requirements set out by the law are done! They must not be compelled to take this backwards step to reregister forevermore. No.
Name:	Bonnie P
Comment:	They say: You don't judge a man by mistake he made, but by the way he fixed it!"Why continue this punishment over and over? If someone did a time, and their registry expired, it makes no sense to force registry over and over! There is no statistic that shows that that can or will help anyone, registry is hard enough and it does not do anything but torture entire families.
Name:	Diana Morris
Comment:	I oppose HF 77. It is cruel, unusual punishment, and unconstitutional. DO NOT VOTE FOR IT.

Name: James Brown

Comment: Please see the attached.

Reductions in Risk Based on Time Offense-Free in the Community: Once a Sexual Offender, Not Always a Sexual Offender

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Whereas there is a common assumption that most individuals with a criminal record can be eventually reintegrated into the community, the public has different expectations for sexual offenders. In many countries, individuals with a history of sexual offenses are subject to a wide range of long-term restrictions on housing and employment, as well as public notification measures intended to prevent them from merging unnoticed into the population of law-abiding citizens. This article examines the testable assumption that individuals with a history of sexual crime present an enduring risk for sexual recidivism. We modeled the long-term (25-year) risk of sexual recidivism in a large, combined sample ($N > 7,000$). We found that the likelihood of new sexual offenses declined the longer individuals with a history of sexual offending remain sexual offense-free in the community. This effect was found for all age groups and all initial risk levels. Nonsexual offending during the follow-up period increased the risk of subsequent sexual recidivism independent of the time free effect. After 10 to 15 years, most individuals with a history of sexual offenses were no more likely to commit a new sexual offense than individuals with a criminal history that did not include sexual offenses. Consequently, policies designed to manage the risk of sexual recidivism need to include mechanisms to adjust initial risk classifications and determine time periods where individuals with a history of sexual crime should be released from the conditions and restrictions associated with the "sexual offender" label.

Keywords: sex offenders, desistance, public protection, recidivism

Sexual violence is a serious public health problem (Pereda, Guilera, Forns, & Gómez-Benito, 2009; Stoltenborgh, van Ijzendoorn, Euser, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2011; World Health Organization, 2013) that increases the likelihood of mental, physical, and behavioral health problems across the life course (Campbell & Wasco, 2005; Chen et al., 2010; Hillberg, Hamilton-Giachritsis, & Dixon, 2011; Kendler et al., 2000; Maniglio, 2009; Nelson et al., 2002; Paras et al., 2009; World Health Organization, 2013). Not surprisingly, there is strong public support for severe, lengthy criminal sanctions (Lynch, 2002) and long-term social control policies for individuals convicted of sexual offenses (Levenson, Brannon, Fortney, & Baker, 2007; Lieb, 2003; Mears, Mancini, Gertz, & Bratton, 2008). Policymakers' concerns about the life-long, enduring risk presented by individuals with a history of sexual crime has resulted in diverse social control mechanisms that apply uniquely to sexual offenders, such as sexual offender registries, community notification, and residency restrictions (Laws, 2016; Letourneau & Levenson, 2010; Logan, 2009).

This article examines the testable assumption that adult males who have been convicted of a sexual offense actually present an enduring risk for sexual recidivism (for information on individuals who have committed sexual offenses as youths, see Caldwell, 2016). Currently, there is consensus that the recidivism risk of individuals convicted of nonsexual offenses declines the longer they remain offense-free in the community (Blumstein & Nakamura, 2009; Bushway, Nieuwbeerta, & Blokland, 2011; Kurlychek, Bushway, & Brame, 2012). As Kurlychek et al. (2012) wrote:

> The general tendency for recidivism risk to decline over time is among the best replicated results in empirical criminology. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that any recidivism study with more than a 2- or 3-year follow-up period that did not find a downward-sloping marginal hazard would be immediately suspect. (p. 75)

These "time offense-free" effects are congruent with the criminal justice systems of most Western democracies, in which there is an expectation and public acceptance that most individuals who have been convicted of a crime can be successfully reintegrated into society. The same expectation and acceptance does not hold for sexual offenders.

The modern wave of sex crime policy can be dated to the 1980s and early 1990s, typically introduced in direct response to sexually motived murders of children by recidivistic offenders (e.g., Joseph Fredericks [Petrunik & Weisman, 2005] in Canada; the kidnapping and murders of Megan Kanka and Jacob Wetterling in the United States). These and other rare but horrific offenses were highly publicized, contributing to what some have called a "panic" about sexually violent predators (Logan, 2009, p. 86) and cementing views about individuals with a history of sexual crime as uniformly high risk for recidivism and resistant to rehabilitation (Harris & Socia, 2016). America in the 1980s and early 1990s was also faced with seemingly unstoppable increases in violent crime rates, accompanied by a shift in US sentiment toward punitiveness (Lynch, 2002). Also contributing to the rapid, widespread propagation of these sex crime policies was increased U.S. federal involvement in state criminal law, and increasingly effective citizen demands on politicians to do something to address sexual offending, often by the parents of child victims (Logan, 2009; Zimring, 2009). The net result was public protection policies that uniquely targeted individuals convicted of sexual offenses: post-release civil commitment, registration, public notification, and residence, employment, and education restrictions (Laws, 2016; Letourneau & Levenson, 2010; Logan, 2009; Zimring, 2009).

Rates of Sexual Recidivism

Follow-up studies of adult males with a history of sexual crime typically find sexual recidivism rates of between 5% and 15% after 5 years, and between 10% and 25% after 10 years (see reviews by Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Harris & Hanson, 2004; Helmus, Hanson, Thornton, Babchishin, & Harris, 2012). These observed rates underestimate the real recidivism rates because not all sexual offenses are reported and available in the databases used by researchers. Nevertheless, these rates do not support the popular belief that sexual offenders inevitably reoffend.

Furthermore, long-term (10+ years) studies of sexual recidivism consistently observe the highest rates during the first few years after release, with gradually declining rates of recidivism thereafter (Blokland & van der Geest, 2015; Cann, Falshaw, & Friendship, 2004; Hanson, Harris, Helmus, & Thornton, 2014; Hanson, Steffy, & Gauthier, 1993; Harris & Hanson, 2004; Prentky, Lee, Knight, & Cerce, 1997; Soothill & Gibbens, 1978). Rather than focusing on the reduction of risk based on time offense-free, early studies emphasized the enduring nature of the risk of sexual offenders (Hanson et al., 1993; Soothill & Gibbens, 1978), particularly for sexual offenders against children (Hanson, 2002). The notion that sexual offenders present an enduring risk is now well entrenched among the public (Harris & Socia, 2016; Levenson et al., 2007), policymakers (Sample & Kadleck, 2008), and those working in the criminal justice system (Bumby & Maddox, 1999; Lawson & Savell, 2003; Zevitz & Farkas, 2000).

Desistance From Sexual Offending

There is no single accepted definition of desistance for a sexual offender. Even if the risk of sexual recidivism declines with time offense-free, even small residual risk could be worrisome given the serious consequences of sexual victimization. For general offenders, desistance is often defined as a marked reduction in the propensity to commit crime, and is typically operationalized in research studies by an absence of self-reported or officially recorded crime for a specified number of years (e.g., 3 to 10; see review by Kazemian, 2007). Desistance for general offenders has also been defined as a reduction of risk (individual propensity to commit crime) that is equal to or less than the rate of spontaneous new offenses among individuals who have never been apprehended for a criminal offense (Bushway et al., 2011; Bushway, Piquero, Broidy, Cauffman, & Mazerolle, 2001; Göbbels, Ward, & Willis, 2012; Kazemian, 2007).

For sexual offenders, a plausible threshold for desistance is when their risk for a new sexual offense is no different than the risk of a spontaneous sexual offense among individuals who have no prior sexual offense history but who have a history of nonsexual crime. If we are going to manage the risk of an individual with a history of sexual crime differently from an individual with a history of nonsexual crime, then their risk of sexual offending should be perceptibly different. A recent review of 11 studies from diverse jurisdictions ($n = 543,024$) found a rate of spontaneous sexual offenses among nonsexual offenders to be in the 1% to 2% range after 5 years (Kahn, Ambroziak, Hanson, & Thornton, 2017). This is meaningfully lower than the sexual recidivism rate of adults who have already been convicted of a sexual offense. However, it is not zero. A sexual recidivism rate of less than 2% after 5 years is also a defensible threshold below which individuals with a history of sexual crime should be released from conditions associated with the sexual offender label. From a risk management perspective, resources that may be spent on these very low risk sexual offenders would be better spent on higher risk offenders, prevention of sexual crime, and victim services.

Statistical Models of Desistance

The current study uses long-term criminal history records to estimate declining recidivism risk and, ultimately, desistance

among sexual offenders. Criminal history records are informative but incomplete indicators of criminal behavior. Consequently, we cannot conclude from an observed recidivism rate of 10% that the remaining 90% have committed no crimes. Some simply haven't got caught. It is also important to distinguish between reductions in an individuals' propensity to commit sexual crime (e.g., deviant sexual interests, low self-control, sexual preoccupations, intentions to offend) and actually committing sexual crime (detected or not). Given that the new wave of sexual offender policies are intended to prevent reoffending in individuals with enduring propensities for sexual crime, propensities are the central constructs guiding current public protection policy for sexual offenders.

Following the standard distinction between observed variables and latent constructs (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955), the propensity to commit crime is a latent construct, which is not directly observable, and would be vigorously denied by all but the most dysfunctional individuals in the criminal justice system. Consequently, these propensities must be inferred from indicators, such as past behavior, attitudes, peer associations, and lifestyle. These propensities can also be inferred by statistical studies of cohorts over time (Blumstein & Nakamura, 2009; Bushway et al., 2011; Hargreaves & Francis, 2014; Soothill & Francis, 2009). Observed variation in crime rates for particular time periods (i.e., empirical hazard rates) should be proportional to the latent propensity to commit crime. Variation in hazard rates, however, is determined by both the composition of the group and changes in individuals' risk. Given that the highest risk offenders will be removed first from the overall sample, the remaining study participants contain an increasing proportion of individuals who were low risk at the onset (*frailty* in survival analysis; Aalen, Borgan, & Gjessing, 2008, pp. 231–268). Consequently, declining hazard rates cannot be directly interpreted as improvements (declining propensities) at the individual level. Such declines, however, can be interpreted as reductions in the overall risk presented by individuals who remain offense-free.

Although reliable evaluation of individual change is important for those assessing and treating individual sexual offenders, public protection policies need not be concerned about teasing apart the relative contribution of individual change versus change in group composition. Global, statistical estimates of risk can and should inform policies concerning the objectively defined groups that should be subject to exceptional public protection measures. In general, the most efficient interventions are proportional to the risk presented, with greater resources directed toward the highest risk individuals (i.e., the risk principle in the risk/need/responsivity model; Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990). As well, principles of fundamental justice dictate that exceptional restrictions and administrative burdens intended to protect the public should be equitably applied to individuals of equivalent risk. In the same way that we respond differently to individuals at different risk levels, so too should we reduce restrictions on individuals for whom there is strong evidence that their propensity to engage in sexual crime is lower than previously believed. Although the moral consequences of a sexual offense may endure indefinitely, the risk of recidivism may not.

Current Study

The purpose of the current study was to extend previous research on the declining risk of sexual recidivism over time (Hanson et al., 2014) by statistically modeling the effects of time sexual offense-free in the community, initial risk level, age, and subsequent nonsexual offending. Discrete time survival analysis was used to estimate hazard rates for a large, aggregated sample of sexual offenders ($N > 7,000$) followed for up to 25 years. The sample included sexual offenders from diverse settings and from the full range of risk levels, as measured by the Static-99R sexual offender risk assessment tool (Helmus, Thornton, Hanson, & Babchishin, 2012). These analyses also allowed us to estimate the length of time at which desistance can be presumed, specifically, when the risk of a new sexual crime is no different than the spontaneous rate of first-time sexual offenses among felons with no history of sexual crime.

Method

Participants

The individuals in the current study were selected from previous studies used to develop and norm the Static-99R sexual offender risk tool (Hanson et al., 2014; Helmus, Thornton, et al., 2012). All participants were adult males (18+) with an officially recorded history of sexual crime, a valid Static-99R score, and at least 6 months of follow-up time. Of the data sets used in previous studies, Knight and Thornton's (2007) sample was excluded because of their anomalous coding of the 10-year survival time for nonrecidivists (all nonrecidivists with more than 10 years follow-up time were censored at exactly 10 years).

The data were drawn from 20 different samples (see Table 1). Following Hanson, Thornton, Helmus, and Babchishin (2016), the samples were grouped into three broad categories: (1) relatively unbiased samples of a routine, complete, or randomly selected set of cases drawn from a particular jurisdiction (routine/complete samples; $k = 8$, $n = 4,026$); (2) individuals referred to specialized sexual offender treatment (treatment samples; $k = 5$, $n = 1,899$); and (3) individuals preselected to be high risk/high need ($k = 5$, $n = 1,141$). The study included two additional, small samples that did not fit the main categories, namely a German sample of sexual murders ($n = 86$; Hill, Habermann, Klusmann, Berner, & Briken, 2008) and a sample of individuals screened to be low risk ($n = 73$; Cortoni & Nunes, 2008). These samples were classified as "other." Previous research with these samples indicated that classification into these four sample types (routine, treatment, high risk, other) can done with high reliability ($\kappa = .92$; Hanson, Thornton, et al., 2016).

The follow-up period ranged from 6 months to 31.5 years ($Mdn = 7.2$ years, $M = 8.2$, $SD = 5.3$ years). Nine of the samples used charges for a new sexual offense as the recidivism criteria, whereas 11 used convictions (see Table 2). Previous analyses with this dataset found relatively little difference in the overall results whether charges and convictions were considered separately or were combined (Helmus, 2009). On average, the mean follow-up time for offenders in the routine samples ($M = 6.7$ years, $SD = 3.4$, range: 6 months to 26.5 years) was shorter than the mean follow-up time for the treatment samples ($M = 11.0$ years, $SD = $

Table 1
Descriptive Information for Samples

Study	*n*	Age M	Age SD	Country	Static-99R M	Static-99R SD	Type of sample	Release period
Routine/complete								
Bartosh et al. (2003)	186	38	12	U.S.	3.3	2.9	Corrections	1996
Bigras (2007)	473	43	12	Canada	2.1	2.4	CSC Reception Centre	1995–2003
Boer (2003)	299	41	12	Canada	2.8	2.8	CSC release cohort	1976–1994
Craissati et al. (2011)	209	38	12	U.K.	2.2	2.3	Community supervision	1992–2005
Eher et al. (2009)	706	41	13	Austria	2.3	2.3	Prison	2000–2005
Epperson (2003)	177	37	13	U.S.	2.5	2.6	Prison and probation	1989–1998
Hanson et al. (2007)	698	42	13	Canada	2.4	2.4	Community supervision	2001–2005
Långström (2004)	1,278	41	12	Sweden	2.0	2.4	National prison release cohort	1993–1997
Preselected treatment								
Allan et al. (2007)	476	42	12	New Zealand	1.8	2.3	Prison treatment	1990–2000
Brouillette-Alarie & Proulx (2008)	223	36	10	Canada	3.9	2.4	Prison & community treatment	1979–2005
Johansen (2007)	273	38	11	U.S.	2.9	2.3	Prison treatment	1994–2000
Romine Swinburne et al. (2008)	680	38	12	U.S.	1.7	2.2	Community treatment	1977–2007
Ternowski (2004)	247	44	13	Canada	1.6	2.5	Prison treatment	1994–1998
High risk/high need								
Bengtson (2008)	311	33	10	Denmark	3.8	2.4	Forensic psychiatric evaluations	1978–1995
Bonta & Yessine (2005)	132	40	10	Canada	5.0	2.2	Preselected high risk	1992–2004
Haag (2005)	198	37	10	Canada	3.9	2.3	Detained until end of sentence	1995
Nicholaichuk (2001)	272	35	9	Canada	4.8	2.4	High intensity treatment	1983–1998
Wilson et al. (2007a, 2007b)	228	42	11	Canada	5.1	2.3	Preselected high risk	1994–2006
Other								
Cortoni & Nunes (2008)	73	42	12	Canada	2.2	2.1	CSC low intensity treatment	2001–2004
Hill et al. (2008)	86	39	11	Germany	4.7	2.0	Sexual homicide perpetrators	1971–2002
Total	7,225	40	12		2.6	2.6		1971–2007

Note. CSC = Correctional Service Canada (administers all sentences of at least 2 years).

6.8, range: 6 months to 31.1 years) and high risk/high need samples (*M* = 8.9 years, *SD* = 5.6, range: 6 months to 24.6 years). As can be seen in Table 3, the distributions of individuals from the different sample types varied based on follow-up period. Of the 4,940 individuals followed for 5 years or more, 48.7% were from routine samples. In contrast, only 5.9% of those followed for 15 years or more were from routine samples (64.6% treatment; 25.4% high risk/high need; 4.1% other; total *n* = 740). Overall, 394 individuals were followed for more than 20 years, and 79 for more than 25 years.

Measures

Static-99R. Static-99R (Helmus, Thornton, et al., 2012) was used as a measure of risk for sexual recidivism. Static-99R contains 10 items based on commonly available demographic (age, relationship history) and criminal history information (e.g., prior sexual offenses, any unrelated victims, total number of prior sentencing occasions for anything). Static-99R (and its previous version, Static-99) are the sexual offender risk assessment tools most commonly used in corrections and forensic mental health (McGrath, Cumming, Burchard, Zeoli, & Ellerby, 2010; Neal & Grisso, 2014). It can be scored with high rater reliability (Phenix & Epperson, 2016) and has moderate ability to discriminate recidivists from nonrecidivists (Helmus, Hanson, et al., 2012).

Static-99R total scores range from −3 to 12 and correspond to the following risk levels: I = very low risk (scores of −3 and −2), II = below average risk (scores of −1 and 0), III = average risk

(scores of 1, 2, and 3), IVa = above average risk (scores of 4 and 5), and IVb = well above average risk (scores of 6 and higher; Hanson, Babchishin, Helmus, Thornton, & Phenix, 2017). The Static-99R risk levels parallel the standardized risk levels developed for general correctional populations by the Justice Centre of the Council of State Governments (Hanson et al., 2017). These standardized risk levels address the crime relevant characteristics of individuals in the criminal justice system, the intensity of correctional supervision and rehabilitation programming needed to reduce their risk, their personal strengths, and their expected prognosis.

For Static-99R, Level I (very low risk) identifies individuals who have no obvious risk-relevant propensities and whose 5-year risk for a new sexual crime is no different from that of individuals with a history of nonsexual crime. Typically, these are older (60+) men who have sexually offended against family members in previous decades. Level II (below average) are individuals whose expected rate of sexual recidivism is lower than average but is still perceptibly higher than the rate among nonsexual offenders. Level II individuals may benefit from some support and supervision, but they are also likely to spontaneously transition to Level I without structured correctional programming. Level III individuals (average risk) are in the middle of the risk distribution. They have crime relevant problems in several areas (e.g., negative attitudes toward authority, sexual preoccupation) and would be expected to require problem-solving supervision and structured correctional programming in order to reduce their risk to Level II. Level IV individuals

Table 2
Recidivism Information

| | | Years follow-up | | Recidivism rate | | | |
| | | | | Sexual | | Nonsexual (prior to sexual) | |
Study	Recidivism criteria	M	SD	n	%	n	%
Routine/complete							
Bartosh et al. (2003)	Charges	5.0	.20	186	11.8	185	44.9
Bigras (2007)	Charges	4.7	1.8	473	6.3	454	17.0
Boer (2003)	Conviction	13.3	2.1	299	8.7	282	41.8
Craissati et al. (2011)	Conviction	9.1	2.7	209	11.5	201	25.4
Eher et al. (2009)	Conviction	3.9	1.1	706	4.0	701	25.7
Epperson (2003)	Charges	7.9	2.5	177	14.1		
Hanson et al. (2007)	Charges	3.5	1.0	698	8.2	694	18.7
Långström (2004)	Conviction	8.9	1.4	1,278	7.5		
Preselected treatment							
Allan et al. (2007)	Charges	5.9	2.8	476	9.7	465	18.5
Brouillette-Alarie & Proulx (2008)	Conviction	10.1	4.3	223	20.6		
Johansen (2007)	Charges	9.1	1.1	273	7.7	263	49.8
Romine Swinburne et al. (2008)	Conviction	16.8	7.8	680	13.8		
Ternowski (2004)	Charges	7.5	1.0	247	8.1	240	14.2
High risk/high need							
Bengtson (2008)	Charges	16.2	4.2	311	33.8	310	41.6
Bonta & Yessine (2005)	Conviction	5.6	2.4	132	15.9	127	38.6
Haag (2005)	Conviction	7.0	.00	198	25.3		
Nicholaichuk (2001)	Conviction	6.6	3.9	272	19.1		
Wilson et al. (2007a, 2007b)	Charges	5.3	2.9	228	10.5		
Other							
Cortoni & Nunes (2008)	Charges	4.6	.60	73	.0	72	11.1
Hill et al. (2008)	Conviction	12.6	6.6	86	15.1	84	53.6
Total		8.2	5.3	7,225	11.1	4,078	27.5

(IVa = above average, IVb = well above average) have potentially severe, chronic problems in several areas related to the propensity to commit sexual crime. Level IV individuals are expected to require extensive correctional interventions (over years) to reduce their risk to Level III. Level IVb is perceptibly higher risk than Level IVa; however, Level IVb is still below the threshold for Level V, for whom the expected recidivism rate is 85% or higher (Hanson et al., 2017). Although Level V is conceptually meaningful, the highest risk individuals identified by Static-99R have observed sexual recidivism rates in the 50% to 60% range (Hanson, Thornton, et al., 2016).

Plan of Analysis

Hazard rates for sexual recidivism were modeled using discrete time survival analysis (Singer & Willett, 1993, 2003; Willett & Singer, 1993). The follow-up period was divided into 6 month intervals, and the probability of sexual recidivism within these intervals was calculated as the number of individuals who were known to have reoffended in that interval divided by the total number of individuals who were at risk in that interval (i.e., had not sexually reoffended in that interval or any prior interval).

Discrete time survival analysis was used instead of continuous time survival analysis because of our substantive interest in the absolute recidivism rates during particular time periods. With continuous time survival analysis (e.g., Cox regression), the quantity being modeled is the instantaneous hazard (Aalen et al., 2008), which can only be turned into expected recidivism rates by averaging across regions of the cumulative hazard curve. In comparison, the discrete time survival analysis provides a more intuitive approach to estimating absolute recidivism rates.

Table 3
Distribution of Cases at Different Follow-Up Periods According to Sample Type

| | Sample type | | | | | | | | | |
| Minimum follow-up time (years) | Routine/complete | | Treatment | | High risk/high need | | Other | | Total cases |
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	
.5	55.7	4,026	26.3	1,899	15.8	1,141	2.2	159	7,225
5	48.7	2,405	32.1	1,585	17.4	860	1.8	90	4,940
10	39.2	750	38.7	739	19.3	369	2.8	54	1,912
15	5.9	44	64.6	478	25.4	188	4.1	30	740
20	1.0	4	78.7	310	17.1	67	3.3	13	394
25	1.3	1	94.9	75	0	0	3.8	3	79

The data were organized in a person-period format, in which each row represented the values for one individual during one interval (see Singer & Willett, 2003, section 10.5). In our dataset, each individual provided one row of data for each 6-month period of follow-up (range of 1 to 50 rows, with time truncated at 25 years). Standard logistic regression software was used to model sexual recidivism rates based on time free (interval), time-invariant covariates (e.g., risk scores at release), and time varying covariates (nonsexual recidivism during the follow-up period). This approach provides equivalent results to conventional life-table survival analysis. Although there are some benefits in using a complementary log-log (clog-log) link function (parameters can be interpreted as hazards), the logistic function is widely understood, can be estimated with standard software, and the difference between the two link functions is not detectable when the probabilities are small ($<$.20; Singer & Willett, 2003, p. 420). In the current study, the largest probability of sexual recidivism for any single interval was 0.0156 (first 6 months following release, i.e., approximately 3% recidivism rate for the first year). When the clog-log link function was used rather than the logistic, the differences were only detectable in the third decimal point, with slightly larger standard errors for the logistic link function compared with clog-log link function.

Rather than considering each time period as a unique categorical variable, we fitted equations with hazard rates as a function of time. Our statistical models were based on the assumption that changes are gradual; we did not expect abrupt changes in the empirical hazards for adjacent time periods. The adequacy of the smoothed model compared with the full categorical model was tested using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC; Burnham & Anderson, 2004) and the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC; Raftery, 1995). Model fit criteria were used because the categorical and continuous models were not nested. In other words, it was impossible to derive the continuous model from the categorical model (each year has its own parameter) by setting parameters to zero.

Although derived from different statistical models (Burnham & Anderson, 2004; Raftery, 1995), both the AIC and the BIC are computed on the basis of the deviance (-2 loglikelihood; $-2LL$) plus a penalty proportional to the number of parameters (K) used in the model. Note that the number of parameters includes the intercept, such that $K = 2$ for a model with one predictor variable. For the AIC, the penalty is twice the number of parameters (AIC = $-2LL + 2K$), and for the BIC, the penalty is the number of parameters times the natural log of the sample size (BIC = $-2LL + \ln(n)K$). There are three options, however, as to how sample size should be defined in person-period data sets (Raftery, 1995; Singer & Willett, 2003): the number of individuals (7,225), the number of person-period observations (105,347), or the number of events (791). Following Volinsky and Raftery (2000), we used the number of events for estimating the BIC.

The absolute values of AIC or BIC are not interpretable. The difference between models, however, identifies the model that best fits the data. Given two models, the model with the lowest AIC/BIC value is the one that best fits the data. For example, if adding a variable (e.g., risk scores) to a recidivism prediction model decreased the AIC/BIC values, this decrease is statistical justification that the risk score predicts recidivism. If the AIC/BIC values stayed the same (or increased) when a variable is added, then the variable is not needed. Although there are no absolute standards for evaluating differences in BIC indices, Raftery (1995) suggests that absolute differences of 0 to 2 are weak, 2 to 6 are positive (i.e., likely to be real), 6 to 10 are strong, and greater than 10 are very strong. In other words, if two models have BIC values with $+/-2$ units of each other, then both equally fit the data and model selection should be based on other considerations (e.g., parsimony). If the BIC for one model is 10 units smaller than another model, then there is very strong statistical support to prefer the model with the lowest BIC value. Similarly, Burnham and Anderson (2004) interpret the difference between the minimum AIC observed for all the models considered and the AIC for any specific model as an indicator of the degree of support for the specific model. If the AIC value for the model is the lowest, then it is the best. Values close to the lowest indicate equivalent models, and models with larger AIC values are unlikely to be true. They suggest that absolute differences of less than 2 indicate substantial support (good agreement), differences of 4 to 7 as indicating a model has considerably less support than another, and models that are more than 10 AIC units higher than the minimum model as having "essentially no support."

The adequacy of the logistic models was also examined using the Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test (Hosmer, Lemeshow, & Sturdivant, 2013). This test is the classic Pearson chi-square goodness-of-fit test with the responses grouped into 8 to 10 equally sized bins (with df = bins -2). Small (nonsignificant) values indicate acceptable fit to the logistic model. The area under the receiver operating characteristic curve (AUC) was used as an effect size measure of the overall model (i.e., the AUC using the estimated probabilities as predictors; see Hosmer et al., 2013, section 5.2.4). In general, the AUC values can be interpreted as the probability that a recidivist would have a higher predicted probability of recidivism than a nonrecidivist.

All numbers in the article were verified by an independent data analyst (social science doctoral-level student) on the basis of the source data sets. All analyses were conducted using SPSS Version 17.

Results

The person-period dataset contained 105,347 observations (6 month intervals) for 7,225 individuals, of whom 791 were identified as sexual recidivists. The follow-up period ended at 25 years, with 79 individuals entering the 25th year. Using life-table survival analysis, the overall sexual recidivism rate was 9.1% at 5 years, 13.3% at 10 years, 16.2% at 15 years, 18.2% at 20 years, and 18.5% at 25 years. Although the cumulative recidivism rate increased, the 5-year hazard decreased: 9.1% up to 5 years, 4.1% from 5 to 10 years, 2.9% from 10 to 15 years, 2.0% from 15 to 20 years, and 0.3% from 20 to 25 years. There was only one sexual recidivist after 20 years.

The first step in the data analysis was to evaluate the credibility of the statistical model. As would be expected, a logistic model that included time as a continuous variable was more plausible ($k = 2$; AIC = 9,143.17, BIC = 9,152.52) than the model that considered each time period as independent, categorical variables ($k = 50$; AIC = 9,189.68; BIC = 9,423.34). For both the AIC and BIC, the differences were large (-46.51 and -270.82, respectively) indicating clear superiority of the continuous model to the (unordered) categorical model. For the continuous model, the Hosmer-Lemeshow test was nonsignificant ($\chi^2 = 15.24$, $df = 8$, $p = .055$). The Hosmer-Lemeshow test for the unordered categor-

ical model indicated serious overfitting: $\chi^2 < .00001$ (actually it was 2.95×10^{-13}; $df = 8$, $p = 1$).

Visually, a logistic model appeared to reasonably represent continuous time and the discrete time hazard (see Figure 1). The ordinate values on the graph (vertical axis) are the proportion of individuals who reoffended sexually each year, given that they have not sexually reoffended in any of the previous years. The error bars ($\pm 1.96 \, [\{p \, (1 - p)\}/n]^{0.5}$) were larger for the later time periods because the absolute number of recidivists was small (for certain cells, only a single individual). When there are no recidivists, there is no variance and the confidence interval was zero. Overall, the logistic model appears to be an adequate basis on which to build subsequent models.

A summary of the analyses is presented in Table 4. On its own, each year offense-free was associated with a 12% decrease in the odds of recidivism ($e[-.131] = .877$). As expected, the recidivism rates were related to risk levels as measured by Static-99R (AIC and BIC decreases of greater than 400). No interaction between time free and Static-99R scores was observed ($\Delta AIC = -1.59$; $\Delta BIC = +3.08$), meaning that the relative risk reductions were constant across risk levels. Routine samples had lower recidivism rates than those preselected to be high risk or those preselected as needing treatment. There was no interaction between sample type and time free ($\Delta AIC = +3.92$; $\Delta BIC = +18.0$; not shown in Table 4). Age was not related to recidivism risk once Static-99R scores were entered, nor was there an interaction between age and time free, meaning that the time free effect applied to sexual offenders of all ages ($\Delta AIC = +0.60$; $\Delta BIC = +5.27$, after controlling for Static-99R and sample type; not shown in Table 4).

There was some evidence of an interaction between Static-99R and sample type, with higher predictive accuracy (discrimination) in routine samples compared with treatment samples or high risk/high need samples. This interaction was supported by the AIC (-9.9) but not the BIC ($+4.14$). However, given that this interaction was found in previous research with a related version of this dataset (Hanson, Thornton, et al., 2016), the interaction between Static-99R scores and sample type was retained in the model.

A visual representation of Model 5 (see Table 4) is presented in Figure 2. This figure presents the declines in estimated sexual recidivism risk for individuals at five different scores (collectively representing all five initial levels of risk, controlling for sample type and sample type by Static-99R interaction). These five levels correspond to Static-99R scores from -2 to 6, which cover the 2016 standardized Static-99R risk categories (Hanson, Babchishin, et al., 2017: Level I [-2] = very low risk; Level II [0] = below average risk; Level III [2] = average risk; Level IVa [4] = above average risk and Level IVb [6] = well above average risk). The desistance threshold in Figure 2 was set at a constant 6-month hazard of 0.0019, which is equivalent to observed 5-year sexual recidivism rates of less than 2%. The raw sexual recidivism rates (unadjusted for follow-up time or sample type) were 1.9% (5/260) for Level I, 3.6% (50/1,381) for Level II, 7.6% (226/2,968) for Level III, 14.7% (235/1603) for Level IVa, and 27.5% (279/1,013) for Level IVb. Note that these raw recidivism rates are somewhat
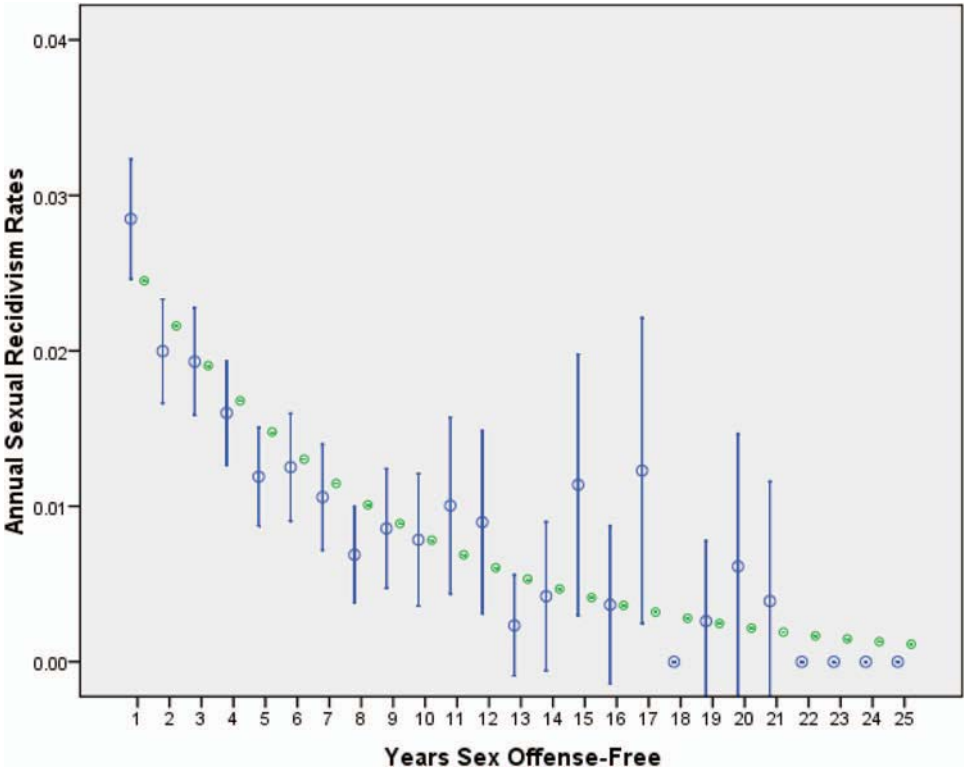

Figure 1. One-year hazard rates for sexual recidivism ($n = 7,225$): Observed with 95% confidence intervals (lines) and estimates from logistic regression (dots; Model 1). See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Table 4
Logistic Regression Estimates of 6 Month Hazard of Sexual Recidivism Based on Time Free, Static-99R, and Sample Type

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Intercept	−4.288 (.055)	−4.732 (.065)	−4.800 (.075)	−4.885 (.074)	−5.002 (.085)
Time free (in years years)	−.131 (.011)	−.123 (.011)	−.106 (.014)	−.128 (.011)	−.130 (.011)
Static-99R		.289 (.014)	.319 (.021)	.270 (.015)	.329 (.022)
Static-99R × Time			−.0082 (.0043)		
Sample type (reference category is routine/complete)					
Treatment				.299 (.089)	.459 (.110)
High risk/high need				.530 (.090)	.920 (.136)
Other				−.397 (.285)	−.705 (.595)
Interaction: Static-99R × Sample type					
Treatment × STATIC					−.081 (.034)
High risk/high need × STATIC					−.137 (.036)
Other × STATIC					.070 (.146)
−2LL	9,139.17	8697.12	8693.53	8654.92	8639.02
K	2	3	4	6	9
AIC (−2LL + 2K)	9,143.17	8703.12	8701.53	8666.92	8657.02
Change (comparison model)		−440.05 (Model1)	−1.59 (Model2)	−36.20 (Model2)	−9.90 (Model4)
BIC (−2LL + K × [6.673])	9,152.51	8717.14	8720.23	8694.94	8699.08
Change (comparison model)		−435.37 (Model1)	3.08 (Model2)	−22.2 (Model2)	4.14 (Model4)
Hosmer-Lemeshow $\chi^2(p)$	15.24 (.055)	8.13 (.42)	8.06 (.43)	4.67 (.79)	4.75 (.78)
AUC	.637	.736	.736	.745	.747

Note. K = 20, n = 7,225, with 791 sexual recidivists. Static-99R scores centered on the median value (2). AIC = Akaike Information Criterion; BIC = Bayesian information criterion; AUC = Area under the receiver operating characteristic Curve. Values in parentheses are the standard errors for the associated parameter estimates.

higher than would be expected in routine (unselected) samples because the aggregated sample included a disproportionate number of offenders preselected to be high risk.

Another representation of Model 5 is presented in Figure 3, which shows the risk levels for each combination of initial Static-99R score and the number of years sexual offense-free in the community. Given that Level I individuals are below the desistance threshold (Hanson, Babchishin, et al., 2017), Figure 3 can be

used to estimate the number of years until desistance for each Static-99R score. It can also be used to estimate adjustments over time to lower risk levels. For example, for individuals with a Static-99R score of −1, they would transition from Level II at 2 years to Level I at 3 years, at which time they would fall below the desistance threshold.

Risk declined over time for individuals at all initial risk levels, and most individuals eventually resembled individuals with no
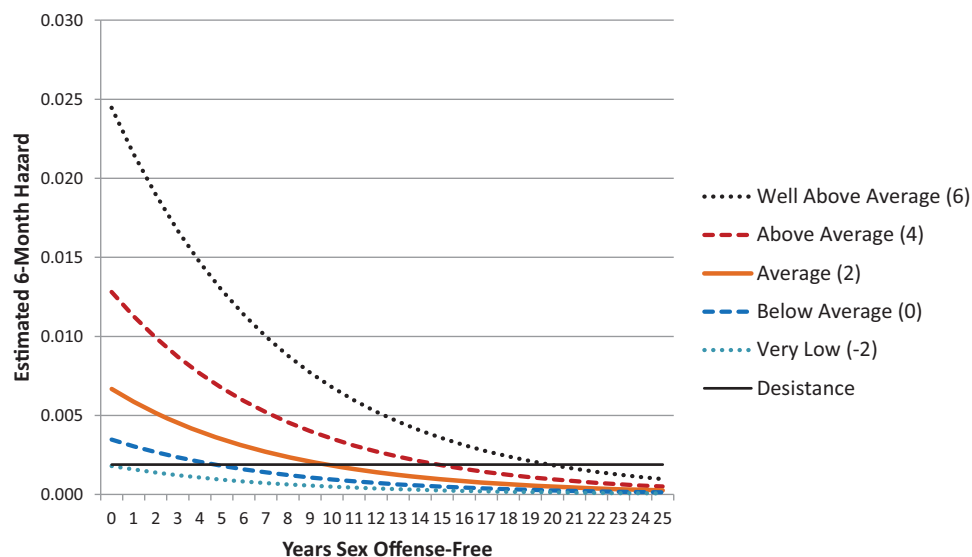

Figure 2. Years to desistance according to initial risk level based on selected Static-99R scores. Estimated hazard rates based on Model 5 (*n* = 7,225) for routine/complete samples. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Years Sexual Offense-Free in the Community

STATIC-99R Scores	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
-3	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
-2	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
-1	II	II	II	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
0	II	II	II	II	II	II	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
1	III	III	III	II	II	II	II	II	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
2	III	III	III	III	III	III	II	II	II	II	II	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
3	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	II	II	II	II	II	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
4	IVa	IVa	IVa	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	II	II	II	II	II	I	I	I	I	I	I
5	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	II	II	II	II	II	I	I	I	I
6	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	II	II	II	II	II	I
7	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	II	II	II
8	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	II
9	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	III	III	III	III	III	III
10	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVb	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	IVa	III	III	III	III

Figure 3. Decline in risk level based on initial Static-99R score and years sexual offense-free in the community. According to Model 5, each Static-99R point increases risk by .329 and each year sex offense-free decreases risk by .130. Individuals were deemed to have transitioned to a lower risk category when their time-adjusted risk for that year was below the yearly hazard at release for individuals at the top of the next lower category. The figure stops at Static-99R scores of 10 because higher scores were rare: 0.08% had a score of 11 or 12 (6 out of 7,225).

prior history of sexual crime. For individuals in the lowest risk category (Level I, very low risk), their risk was at the desistance threshold at time of release. Individuals in risk Level II crossed the desistance threshold between 3 years (Static-99R score of -1) and 6 years (Static-99R score of 0). Individuals assessed as Level III (average risk) crossed the desistance threshold (became a "1") after 8 to 13 years sexual offense-free in the community. For risk Level IVa (above average risk), they crossed the desistance threshold by year 16 to 18. Individuals at the low end of Level IVb (Static-99R score of 6) crossed the desistance threshold at year 21. In other words, only individuals with Static-99R scores of 7 or higher ($<4\%$ of the initial cohort) would have a risk of sexual recidivism perceptibly higher than the desistance threshold given that they have remained sexual offense-free for 21 years in the community. No individuals who remained sexual offense-free for 18 years would be considered to be above average risk.

Although it is possible to use Model 5 to estimate the time to desistance for individuals at the very highest risk levels (e.g., 34.5 years from high risk/high need samples with Static-99R scores of 12–the maximum possible), extending projections beyond 20 years has limited precision as well as limited utility. In our dataset, there was only one sexual recidivist out of the 394 individuals followed between 20 and 25 years, when our follow-up ended. This corresponds to a 5-year recidivism rate of 0.3% in life table survival analysis, well below the desistance threshold of 1.9%.

The Effect of Nonsexual Recidivism on Sexual Recidivism Risk

Of the total 20 data sets, 13 data sets (six routine, three treatment, two high risk/high need, two other) identified whether individuals reoffended with a nonsexual offense prior to the date of sexual recidivism (or the end of follow-up for nonrecidivists). This reduced dataset included 49,743 observations (6 month intervals) for 4,078 individuals, of whom 1,121 were nonsexual recidivists and 318 were sexual recidivists (122 individuals were both sexual and nonsexual recidivists).

As can be seen in Table 5 (Model 5a), the model containing time free, Static-99R, sample type, and the Static-99R/sample type interaction was similar in the reduced sample ($k = 13$, AUC = .747) as in the full collection of samples in Table 4 ($k = 20$, AUC = .747). Nonsexual recidivism added incrementally to the model (Model 6), increasing the odds of sexual recidivism by a factor of 1.55 ($e[.440] = 1.55$) over the effects of time free, Static-99R, and sample type. This model was an adequate fit to the logistic distribution as indicated by a nonsignificant Hosmer-Lemeshow test ($\chi^2 = 13.25$, $df = 8$, $p = .103$). The interaction between nonsexual recidivism and time free did not meaningfully add to the model (ΔAIC $= -1.71$; ΔBIC $= +2.02$, not shown in Table 5), nor did the interaction between nonsexual recidivism and risk at release (as measured by Static-99R scores: ΔAIC $= -1.95$; ΔBIC $= +1.81$). In other words, new nonsexual offenses increased the risk of sexual recidivism, but did not erase the sexual offense time free effect. The effect of time free from a sexual offense was independent and incremental to the effect of continued nonsexual offending. In Model 6 (see Table 5) the effect of any nonsexual recidivism was $B = .440$ compared with $B = -.135$ for each year sexual offense-free. Whereas each year time free was associated with a 12% reduction in sexual recidivism risk, a new nonsexual offense was associated with a 55% increase. Another way of visualizing these effects is that nonsexual recidivism resets the

Table 5

Incremental Effect of Nonsexual Recidivism on 6-Month Hazard of Sexual Recidivism in Reduced Sample

	Model 5a	Model 6
Intercept	−5.353 (.134)	−5.407 (.136)
Time free (in years)	−.120 (.018)	−.135 (.019)
Static-99R	.344 (.034)	.322 (.035)
Sample type (reference category is routine/complete)		
Treatment	.212 (.198)	.228 (.198)
High risk/high need	1.425 (.193)	1.459 (.193)
Other	−.399 (.621)	−.413 (.635)
Interaction: Static-99R × Sample type		
Treatment × STATIC	−.087 (.062)	−.088 (.062)
High risk/high need × STATIC	−.194 (.053)	−.192 (.053)
Other × STATIC	.011 (.157)	.025 (.162)
Nonsexual recidivism		.440 (.125)
−2LL	3578.81	3566.67
K	9	10
AIC (−2LL + 2K)	3596.81	3586.67
Change		−10.14
BIC (−2LL + K*[5.762])	3630.67	3624.29
Change		−6.38 (from Model 5a)
Hosmer-Lemeshow $\chi^2(p)$	4.27 (.83)	13.25 (.10)
AUC	.747	.755

Note. K = 13, n = 4,078 with 318 sexual recidivists. Static-99R scores centered on the median value (2). AIC = Akaike information criterion; BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion; AUC = Area Under the receiver operating characteristic Curve. Values in parentheses are the standard errors for the associated parameter estimates.

individual's relative risk to what it would have been 3.3 years previously (.440/[.135] = 3.26).

Discussion

Society has the right and responsibility to protect itself from the truly dangerous. If predators are prowling for victims, we should do what we can to restrict their access to the vulnerable. Determining who is actually dangerous, and for how long, turns out to be harder than we thought. As shown in the current study, it takes more than a conviction for a sexual crime to identify individuals who have an enduring risk for sexual crime. The risk for sexual recidivism varies substantially across individuals at the time of sentencing; importantly, the risk predictably declines the longer individuals remain sexual offense-free in the community.

Declines were observed for sexual offenders at all risk levels. In routine samples, the lowest risk individuals (Level I) were below the desistance threshold at time of release. Within 10 to 15 years, the vast majority of individuals with a history of sexual crime will be no more likely to commit a sexual crime than individuals who have been convicted of a nonsexual crime and who have never been previously convicted of a sexual crime (1% to 2% after 5 years; Kahn et al., 2017). For individuals classed as Level II (below average), they crossed the desistance threshold between 3 and 6 years after release. For Level III (average), they crossed it between 8 and 13 years, and for IVa (above average), it was between 16 and 18 years. For the highest risk offenders (well above average, IVb), their risk declines to desistance levels after 20 years, although precise estimates for this risk range are difficult to assert given the data available (there was only one sexual recidivist out of the 394 individuals followed between 20 and 25 years).

The observed decline in risk based on time offense-free is consistent with the broader criminological literature for general (nonsexual) offenders (Blumstein & Nakamura, 2009; Bushway et al., 2011; Bushway et al., 2001; Kurlychek, Brame, & Bushway, 2006, 2007; Kurlychek et al., 2012; Soothill & Francis, 2009). It is also consistent with previous studies of sexual offenders (Ackerley, Soothill, & Francis, 1998; Amirault & Lussier, 2011; Blokland & van der Geest, 2015; Hanson et al., 1993; Harris & Hanson, 2004; Nakamura & Blumstein, 2015; Prentky et al., 1997). The reasons for this strong, predictable decline in hazard rates are difficult to infer from the currently available data.

We expect that part of the effect is attributable to individuals with the greatest propensity for sexual crime reoffending shortly after release (and often), making them, consequently, most likely to be caught and removed from the follow-up sample (the effect of frailty in survival analysis [Aalen et al., 2008]). Notice, however, that the declines in risk based on time offense-free applied to individuals at all risk levels, and was only slightly reduced after controlling for the risk measure used in this study, Static-99R. Although Static-99R had moderate predictive accuracy, it does not measure all relevant risk factors (Babchishin, Hanson, & Helmus, 2012; Hanson, Helmus, & Harris, 2015). Consequently, we expect that the early recidivists were actually riskier than other individuals with identical Static-99R scores; however, frailty is unlikely to explain all of the statistical effect of time free on risk. At least part of the decline should be attributed to change within individuals.

Offender change is often linked to deliberate intervention (e.g., rehabilitation programs) or the slow, natural process of aging. The effect of interventions depends on both the quality of the intervention

(Hanson, Bourgon, Helmus, & Hodgson, 2009) as well as an individual's response to that treatment (Olver et al., 2016). Some of the individuals in our samples would have participated in well-designed programs that helped them to regulate their risk-relevant propensities. Treatment effects, however, should have been most apparent early in the follow-up period. Treatment effects are not a natural explanation for the gradual decline in risk over decades. Similarly, although aging may explain some of the effects, the time free declines were much larger than would be expected from aging alone. The large cross-sectional study of the statistical effect of age at release by Helmus, Thornton, et al. (2012) found that the average statistical effect of a year of aging was a decline to 0.98 of the previous year's hazard ($B = -.02$) for sexual recidivism. In comparison, the average effect of a year spent offense-free in the community was six times larger (.88, $B = -.13$).

Something more than frailty, aging, and the effect of treatment is needed to explain the observed time free effects. One simple explanation is that many individuals eventually learned how to make a prosocial lifestyle rewarding (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Thornton, 2016). Each time individuals expend energy seeking to make life better in prosocial ways, and they succeed, they accumulate skills, knowledge, and social resources that make it easier to do so again in the future. Each prosocial choice may be uncertain, depending on fluctuating motivation and opportunities; nevertheless, the cumulative effect of successful prosocial choices will make future choices of this kind easier, more self-congruent, and more attractive.

In support of this view, there is some evidence that individuals with a history of sexual crime are less likely to reoffend when they have workable, prosocial options available. In a series of studies, Willis and colleagues (Scoones, Willis, & Grace, 2012; Willis & Grace, 2008, 2009) have shown that reduced recidivism is associated with high-quality release plans that support accommodation, positive social connections, employment, and prosocial, personally meaningful goals. Furthermore, the effect of good release plans was found to be incremental to static and dynamic risk factors (Scoones et al., 2012). Relatedly, McGrath and colleagues (Lasher & McGrath, 2017; McGrath, Lasher, & Cumming, 2012) have found that those who avoided sexual recidivism while under community supervision showed improvements in employment, residence and social influences. Consequently, it is quite plausible that the gradual, multiyear declines in hazard rates documented in the current study are linked to individuals developing increasingly effective, prosocial ways of achieving a satisfying life.

Regardless of the theoretical explanations, the time free effect is striking, and has considerable practical importance. It would be difficult to accumulate the criminal history associated with high risk scores (e.g., large number of prior sexual and nonsexual offenses) without, at some point, having many of the attributes associated with the onset and persistence of sexual crime. The elevated recidivism rates of the higher risk offenders (Level IVa and IVb) in the first few years following release suggest that, for many, their risk-relevant propensities remain unabated. Nevertheless, most (80%) of the higher risk group (Level IV) are never reconvicted for another sexual offense. Among those who remained in the sample, the hazard rates for the vast majority eventually declined to rates equivalent to those presented by lower risk offenders (Level I, Level II) at time of release. Either the initial classification as higher risk

was wrong, or the offender changed during the follow-up period. In either case, our findings indicate that the initial classification as "higher risk" should be revised downward based on extended periods of being in the community and not reoffending sexually.

Implications for Policy

A distinctive feature of modern sex crime policies is the widespread use of social controls external to the criminal justice system, such as community notification, registration, and residency restrictions (Laws, 2016; Logan, 2009; Simon & Leon, 2008). These measures are not intended to be punishments for crimes (*Smith v. Doe*, 2003), even if the individuals targeted perceive them as such (Levenson, Grady, & Leibowitz, 2016). Instead, they are justified on the grounds of public protection. Individuals are targeted because policymakers believe they are likely to do it again. This is a testable assumption, and, as it turns out, not entirely true.

There is strong evidence that (a) there is wide variability in recidivism risk for individuals with a history of sexual crime; (b) risk predictably declines over time; and (c) risk can be very low—so low, in fact, that it becomes indistinguishable from the rate of spontaneous sexual offenses for individuals with no history of sexual crime but who have a history of nonsexual crime. These findings have clear implications for constructing effective public protection policies for sexual offenders.

First, the most efficient public protection policies will vary their responses according to the level of risk presented. Uniform policies that apply the same strategies to all individuals with a history of sexual crime are likely insufficient to manage the risk of the highest risk offenders, while over-managing and wasting resources on individuals whose risk is very low. The implementation of differential supervisory and management responses based on risk requires objective, evidence-based indicators for distinguishing between risk levels. As demonstrated in the current study, such indicators are available for adult offenders, and widely used in corrections and forensic mental health (i.e., the demographic and criminal history variables that comprise Static-99R scores; Hanson, Babchishin, et al., 2017).

The second implication is that efficient public policy responses need to include a process for reassessment. We cannot assume that our initial risk assessment is accurate and true for life. All systems that classify sexual offenders according to risk level also need a mechanism to reclassify individuals: the individuals who do well should be reassigned to lower risk levels, and individuals who do poorly should be reassigned to higher risk levels. The results of the current study, in particular, justify automatically lowering risk based on the number of years sexual offense-free in the community. The diminishing importance of sexual offense history over time is particularly relevant when considering whether civil, public protection measures should be applied retroactively. To paraphrase Kurlychek et al. (2012), any public protection policy that does not allow for diminished risk over time should be immediately suspect.

The third implication is that there should be an upper limit to the absolute duration of public protection measures. In the current study, there were few individuals who presented more than a negligible risk after 15 years, and none after 20 years. Although there was one sexual recidivist after 20 years in our dataset, we

could not reliably identify a class of individuals whose likelihood of a new sexual offense remained meaningfully greater than the desistance threshold after 20 years. Nor have other researchers (e.g., Blokland & van der Geest, 2015, Figure 12.2b; Hargreaves & Francis, 2014). Consequently, lifetime restrictions seem to be designed for a category of individuals that do not exist.

Critics may argue that we cannot be too safe when it comes to the risk of sexual offenses. Although the harm caused by sexual offenses is serious, there are, however, finite resources that can be accorded to the problem of sexual victimization. From a public protection perspective, it is hard to justify spending these resources on individuals whose objective risk is already very low prior to intervention. Furthermore, available research has not found that long-term or lifelong registration and public notification, and the imposition of concomitant restrictions on residence, education, and employment are having the intended effects (Letourneau, Levenson, Bandyopadhyay, Sinha, & Armstrong, 2010; Levenson & Hern, 2007; Meloy, Miller, & Curtis, 2008; Mustaine, 2014; Simon & Leon, 2008). Consequently, resources would be better spent on activities more likely to reduce the public health burden of sexual victimization, such as facilitating release planning and stable housing (Willis & Grace, 2008, 2009), community treatment for offenders (Schmucker & Lösel, 2015) and counseling services for victims (Taylor & Harvey, 2010).

Implications for Research

The current study supports the need for further research on desistance among sexual offenders, that is, the characteristics of individuals with a history of sexual offending who no longer present a significant risk for sexual recidivism. Although the current research used relatively simple criminal history variables, it is likely that we could identify individuals who have desisted much sooner by considering the quality of their community adjustment (Lasher & McGrath, 2017). One challenge that has vexed desistance research for sexual offenders has been the definition of the index group, that is, individuals who have stopped sexual offending. Desistance inherently concerns a future that can never be fully known in advance. The observation that individuals have not been caught is an insensitive indicator of actual behavior. Furthermore, we have little reason to trust offenders' self-report, given that many individuals deny committing the offenses for which they have been convicted. The current study suggests that these problems are not insurmountable.

The ideal desistance research design would involve follow-up (until death) based on diverse sources of information; however, it would also be possible to use the current findings to inform plausible cross-sectional, case control designs. Individuals identified as below the desistance threshold (Level I) based on criminal history variables and time free could be compared with those at higher risk levels on psychological characteristics (e.g., self-control, attitudes tolerant of sexual offending), lifestyle, community adjustment, or other variables of theoretical interest. Such designs would be much less expensive than follow-up studies, and could be completed within the time frame of typical grant funding (i.e., 2 to 3 years). Furthermore, it is likely that much valuable data are already recorded in administrative databases. Although very long-term community supervision of low risk offenders is ineffective public policy, the fact that it commonly occurs provides a source of easily identifiable participants for desistance research.

Limitations

Given the secretive nature of sexual offending, researchers must always be cognizant of the gap between officially recorded crime and actual behavior. Although the extent to which officially recorded sexual offending tracks offending behavior is unknown, our assumption is that it is proportional for sexual and nonsexual offenders at different risk levels. If there are systematic differences in the extent to which sexual and nonsexual offenders are caught for sexual crime, then the current estimates for desistance periods would be incorrect. Our expectation, however, is that the detection rate for sexual crime would be higher for individuals with a history of sexual crime than those without (police would consider them on a shortlist of suspects, and whatever factors lead to their previous convictions would likely still be present). If the detection rate for sexual crime is higher for those with a history of sexual crimes than those without, then the years to desistance estimated in the current study would be too long.

Another concern for long-term recidivism studies is the effects of broad societal changes. Estimating recidivism over a 25-year follow-up necessarily entails studying individuals released in the 1980s and 1990s. Although secondary analysis of the current dataset did not find meaningful patterns based on year of release (Helmus, 2009), other studies have found substantial declines in the recidivism rate of adolescents who sexually offended (Caldwell, 2016) and for adult sexual offenders (Minnesota Department of Corrections, 2007). The reasons for these declines are not fully understood, but they are consistent with the overall shift toward lower crime rates (Blumstein & Wallman, 2006) and greater risk aversion in the general population (Mishra & Lalumière, 2009).

The study only examined adult males and should not be generalized to youth or adult women. Given the predictable age-crime curve during adolescence, it is very likely that the time free effects are even greater for teenagers than for adults (Hargreaves & Francis, 2014). The highest risk period for being charged with a sexual offense is early adolescence (ages 13 and 14; Cotter & Beaupré, 2014, Chart 7); however, the sexual recidivism rate of adolescents is lower than for adults (Caldwell, 2016). Given the developmental instability of youth, it would be a mistake to consider young people who have committed sexual crime to be equivalent to adults who have committed similar criminal code offenses (Letourneau & Caldwell, 2013).

Conclusions

The vast majority of individuals with a history of sexual crime desist from further sexual crime. Although sexual crime has serious consequences, and invokes considerable public concern, there is no evidence that individuals who have committed such offenses inevitably present a lifelong enduring risk of sexual recidivism. Critics may argue that the near zero recidivism rates observed in the current study should not be trusted because most sexual crimes remain undetected. This type of argument, however, distances policy decisions from evidence. If the goal is increased public protection (not retribution or punishment), then efficient policies would be proportional to the risk presented. Risk in most individuals with a history of sexual crime will eventually decline to levels that are difficult to distinguish from the risk presented by the general population. Instead of depleting resources on such low risk individuals, sexual victimization would be better addressed by

increased focus on truly high risk individuals, primary prevention, and victim services.

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Name: James Caulder

Comment: Where is the data and evidence that suggests this law is needed? Why isnt it included in the legislative record? My guess is because there is none. This bill will do nothing to enhance public safety. Had the authors of the bill done any research on the subject of risk of recidivism after offense, they would have found that risk drops precipitously the longer the time period a person remains offense free.Laws are not free to implement. Iowa would be better served by spending the money this bill would cost, and indeed implementation and maintenance of the entire registry, on programs centered on prevention, healing, and rehabilitation that would enhance public safety.

Declaration of Dr. R. Karl Hanson.
United States District Court for the Northern District of California. Civil Case No. C 12 5713. Filed 11-7-12

Selection:

I, R. Karl Hanson, declare as follows:

I am a Senior Research Scientist at Public Safety Canada. Throughout my career, **I have studied recidivism, with a focus on sex offenders.** I discuss in this declaration key findings and conclusions of research scientists, including myself, regarding recidivism rates of the general offender population and sex offenders in particular. **The information in this declaration is based upon my personal knowledge and on sources of the type which researchers in my field would rely upon in their work.** If called upon to testify, I could and would competently testify thereto.

Summary of Declaration:

My research on recidivism shows the following:

1) **Recidivism rates are not uniform across all sex offenders.** Risk of re-offending varies based on well-known factors and can be reliably predicted by widely used risk assessment tools such as the Static-99 and Static-99R, which are used to classify offenders into various risk levels.

2) **Once convicted, most sexual offenders are never re-convicted of another sexual offence.**

3) **First-time** sexual offenders are significantly **less likely** to sexually re-offend than are those with previous sexual convictions.

4) Contrary to the popular notion that sexual offenders remain at risk of reoffending through their lifespan, **the longer offenders remain offence-free in the community, the less likely they are to re-offend sexually**. Eventually, they are less likely to re-offend than a non-sexual offender is to commit an "out of the blue" sexual offence.

   a) Offenders who are classified as low-risk by Static-99R pose no more risk of recidivism than do individuals who have never been arrested for a sex-related offense but have been arrested for some other crime.

SEXUAL OFFENDER SEXUAL RECIDIVISM RISK LEVELS OVER TIME
Recidivism was calculated at six month intervals - .5, 1.0, 1.5 years, etc. Groups were differentiated by Static 99R risk level.

Static 99R Categories used in this specific research project
(Note differences from the ordinary Static 99R groupings)
Line A represents **High Risk** = Static score of 5 or above
(16% of the 7,740 sex offenders included in the study)
Line B represents **Medium Risk** = Static score between 0 and 4
(68% of the 7,740 sex offenders included in the study)
Line C represents **Low Risk** = Below a score of 0 on the Static
(16% of the 7,740 sex offenders included in the study)
Line D (the thick line) represents the "base rate" of sexual offending of a group previously arrested for some type of non-sexual crime and who have no recorded history of sexual offending. It is termed the "**REDEMPTION BAR.**"

Percent Recidivism by Time Interval (Years)

b) After 10 - 14 years in the community without committing a sex offense, medium-risk offenders pose no more risk of recidivism than Individuals who have never been arrested for a sex-related offense but have been arrested for some other crime.

c) After 17 years without a new arrest for a sex-related offense, high-risk offenders pose no more risk of committing a new sex offense than do individuals who have never been arrested for a sex related offense but have been arrested for some other crime.

5) Based on my research, my colleagues and I recommend that rather than considering all sexual offenders as continuous, lifelong threats, **society will be better served when legislation and policies consider the cost/benefit break point** after which resources spent tracking and supervising low-risk sexual offenders are better re-directed toward the management of high-risk sexual offenders, crime prevention, and victim services.

(Emphasis added)

1 *DOES A WATCHED POT BOIL? A Time-Series Analysis of New York State's Sex Offender Registration and Notification Law*. Jeffrey C. Sandler, Naomi J. Freeman, and Kelly M. Social Psychology, Public Policy, and Law 2008, Vol. 14, No. 4, 284-302. "However, as stated earlier, research has found relatively low recidivism rates for sex offenders (ranging from 5% to 19%)." AND "The current study also found that 95.9% of all arrests for any RSO, 95.9% of all arrests for rape, and 94.1% of all arrests for child molestation were of first-time sex offenders."

2 See Declaration of Dr. Karl Hanson, above.

3 *High Risk Sex Offenders May Not Be High Risk Forever*; R. Karl Hanson, Andrew J. R. Harris, Leslie Helmus, & David Thornton. Journal of Interpersonal Violence (in press, November 3, 2013) "Overall, the risk of sexual recidivism was highest during the first few years after release, and decreased substantially the longer individuals remained sex offence-free in the community. This pattern was particularly strong for the high risk sexual offenders (defined by Static-99R scores). Whereas the 5 year sexual recidivism rate for high risk sex offenders was 22% from the time of release, this rate decreased to 4.2% for the offenders in the same static risk category who remained offence-free in the community for 10 years."

4 *DOES A WATCHED POT BOIL? A Time-Series Analysis of New York State's Sex Offender Registration and Notification Law*. Jeffrey C. Sandler, Naomi J. Freeman, and Kelly M. Social Psychology, Public Policy, and Law 2008, Vol. 14, No. 4, 284-302. "Second, registration and community notification laws are based on the false assumption that strangers commit most sexual offenses. … In fact, according to a Bureau of Justice study, 93% of child sexual abuse victims knew their abuser (34.3% were family members and 58.7% were acquaintances). In addition, approximately 9 out of 10 adult rape or sexual assault victims had a prior relationship with the offender either as a family member, intimate, or acquaintance." (Greenfeld, 1997). Despite the public perception that sex offenders are strangers stalking playgrounds and other areas where children congregate, the majority of offenses occur in the victims' home or the home of a friend, neighbor, or relative (Greenfeld, 1997).

5 *Megan's Law: Assessing the Practical and Monetary Efficacy. Grant Award # 2006-IJ-CX-0018 National Institute of Justice*. Kristen Zgoba, Ph.D., Philip Witt, Ph.D. "This lack of outcome studies means that Megan's Laws constitute an untested mandate in the domain of empirical research. Despite widespread community support for these laws, there is virtually no evidence to support their effectiveness in reducing either new first-time sex offenses (through protective measures or general deterrence) or sex re-offenses (through protective measures and specific deterrence). (Page 7) "Conclusion: Despite wide community support for these laws, there is little evidence to date, including this study, to support a claim that Megan's Law is effective in reducing either new first-time sex offenses or sexual re-offenses." (Page 41)

6 *Public Awareness and Action Resulting From Sex Offender Community Notification Laws*. Amy L. Anderson and Lisa L. Sample. Criminal Justice Policy Review, 2008; 19; 371. "Few studies have examined the degree to which citizens access registry information or take preventative action in response. Survey responses from a representative sample of Nebraska residents were used to examine the degree to which people access registration information, the feelings this information invokes, and if preventative measures are subsequently taken by citizens. The results suggest that the majority of citizens had not accessed registry information, although the majority of people knew the registry existed, and few respondents took any preventative measures as a result of learning sex offender information."

NARSOL
National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws

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Research that Defies Assumptions

A number of assumptions support the creation and maintenance of sex offender registries. Although these assumptions are widely held, accumulating scientific research on the actual realities makes it clear that these assumptions are, in almost every case, not accurate… Note that the following information is based upon currently available research and could change should new studies become available…

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS
1 Sex offenders differ in many important ways, including their risk to reoffend.[1, 2]
2 The longer a sex offender remains offense free in the community, the **less likely he is** to reoffend.[3]
3 About **95%** of solved sex crimes are committed by individuals never previously identified as sex offenders and so **not registered**.[1]
4 Approximately **93%** of sex offenses against children are committed by persons **known** to the victim, not by "strangers."[4]
5 Research studies have found **no relationship** between having a registry and a **decrease in sex offenses**.[5]
6 Little research has been done but one study indicates that a minority of citizens access the internet information and only a minority of those take any action.[6]

From: *A Better Path to Community Safety: Sex Offender Registration in California*. 2014. California Sex Offender Management Board (Emphasis added.)

Name: Chuck Henderson

Comment: Dear Honorable Members of the Iowa Legislature,I am writing to express my opposition to Iowa bill HF 77, which would modify "sex offender" registry requirements by requiring "sex offenders" whose registration requirements have expired to reregister and making penalties applicable.According to a study by Sandler, Freeman, and Socia (2010), "over 95% of all sexual offense arrests were committed by firsttime sex offenders." This suggests that the registry is not deterring those who have never committed a sexual offense before and is instead targeting individuals who have already served their time and are trying to reintegrate into society.Requiring individuals whose registration requirements have expired to reregister and making penalties applicable would further stigmatize and marginalize these individuals, making it even more difficult for them to successfully reintegrate into society. This can actually increase the risk of reoffending, as individuals who are unable to find employment, housing, and support may be more likely to engage in criminal behavior.Additionally, this bill would place an unnecessary burden on law enforcement resources and increase the risk of registry errors and false positives, as individuals who have not reoffended would still be subject to registry requirements and penalties.In light of these facts, I urge you to reconsider Iowa bill HF 77 and instead focus on evidencebased strategies that are proven to be effective in preventing sexual offenses and reducing recidivism, such as providing individuals with treatment, support, and opportunities for successful reintegration into society.Thank you for your time and consideration.Sincerely,Chuck Henderson

DOES A WATCHED POT BOIL?
A Time-Series Analysis of New York State's Sex Offender Registration and Notification Law

Jeffrey C. Sandler, Naomi J. Freeman, and Kelly M. Socia
University at Albany

Despite the fact that the federal and many state governments have enacted registration and community notification laws as a means to better protect communities from sexual offending, limited empirical research has been conducted to examine the impact of such legislation on public safety. Therefore, utilizing time-series analyses, this study examined differences in sexual offense arrest rates before and after the enactment of New York State's Sex Offender Registration Act. Results provide no support for the effectiveness of registration and community notification laws in reducing sexual offending by: (a) rapists, (b) child molesters, (c) sexual recidivists, or (d) first-time sex offenders. Analyses also showed that over 95% of all sexual offense arrests were committed by first-time sex offenders, casting doubt on the ability of laws that target repeat offenders to meaningfully reduce sexual offending.

Keywords: sex offender, registration, notification, time-series analysis, public policy

Few types of crime command the same public attention and evoke the same level of outrage as sexual offenses. This fact is reflected in the unique handling of such offenses both by legislative bodies and media outlets. The most obvious example of differential legislative treatment is the relatively recent rise of registration, community notification, and residency restriction laws for sex offenders released back into local communities, as well as civil commitment laws for offenders about to be released. Such regulations have been largely inspired by public reactions to particularly heinous sexual offense cases (e.g., Adam Walsh Children Protection and Safety Act, 2006; Megan's Law, 1996; The Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act, 1994; The Pam Lychner Sexual Offender Tracking and Identification Act, 1996), yet registration and notification are not required for perpetrators of other heinous crimes such as murder or domestic violence.

Evidence of the differential treatment of sexual crimes can also be found in the media. For example, research has shown the media to overreport sexual crimes such as rape by a factor of almost 14 times compared with their actual rate of

incidence (Ditton & Duffy, 1983) and to present sexual crimes in a manner that inspires fear significantly more often than it does when reporting a homicide, robbery, or assault (Dowler, 2006). Although researchers debate the exact reason(s) for this overrepresentation, most explanations center around the idea that sexual offenses are deemed to be more newsworthy and of interest to the public (Greer, 2003). Regardless of the rationale behind such differential reporting, however, some researchers are concerned about its impact. For example, Jones (1999) argued that "the media's desire to highlight only the most violent and horrendous sex crimes (with little attention focused on the rehabilitation of sex offenders) plays a large role in perpetuating society's belief that sex offenders cannot be rehabilitated" (p. 86). According to Jones, this perception, in turn, evokes an emotional response to sexual offenses, causing the public to lobby for legislation such as registration and community notification, which may have little meaningful impact on the actual rates of sexual victimization, given that the majority of sexual offenses are committed by a relative or acquaintance (Greenfeld, 1997; Snyder, 2000). Furthermore, this perception that sex offenders cannot be rehabilitated is not supported by research, which has found cognitive-behavioral therapy to significantly reduce rates of sexual recidivism (see Craig, Browne, & Stringer, 2003; Hatch-Maillette, Scalora, Huss, & Baumgartner, 2001; Lösel & Schmucker, 2005; McGrath, Cumming, Livingston, & Hoke, 2003).

Associated with the special level of attention given to sexual offenses (probably both contributing to and resulting from it) is a belief that released sex offenders pose a greater threat to communities than other released offenders. In his detailed analysis of sexual crime media coverage, Greer (2003) found "there is a clear assumption of recidivism, a taken-for-granted notion that sex offenders *will* recidivate" (p. 138). As with the assumption that sex offenders cannot be rehabilitated, this assumption is also not supported by research. For example, in its detailed analysis of 15 states, the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that only 5.3% of the 9,691 sex offenders released in 1994 were re-arrested for a new sex offense within 3 years of being released (Langan, Schmitt, & Durose, 2003), compared with re-arrest rates of 73.8% for property offenders and 66.7% for drug offenders (Langan & Levin, 2002).

Based on the assumptions mentioned earlier, however, it is not surprising that a great deal of effort has been spent crafting legislation that seeks to minimize future sexual victimization. Registration and community notification laws represent two such legislative initiatives. As a means to increase public safety, registration and notification laws seek to: (a) allow residents to know the whereabouts of convicted sex offenders, (b) serve as a deterrent for future sexual offenses, and (c) assist local law enforcement agencies in investigating and solving future sexual offenses (Lovell, 2001; Phillips, 1998). Despite the widespread use of these laws, little empirical research has investigated whether they are, in fact, increasing public safety. Such investigations are important given continuing, and often expensive, legislative efforts directed at convicted sex offenders, such as the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (2006; which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will cost $1.5 billion over 5 years to implement). Thus, to address this gap in the current literature, the present study examined differences in sexual offense arrest rates before and after the enactment

of New York State's Sex Offender Registration Act (SORA) to determine whether these laws are increasing public safety.

Effectiveness of Registration and Community Notification Laws

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have laws requiring the registration and community notification of convicted sex offenders (Lovell, 2001; Thomas, 2003). Surprisingly, however, little research has evaluated whether registration and community notification laws make released sex offenders more law abiding than they would be without such laws, and whether these laws do, in fact, increase public safety (Welchans, 2005).

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Schram & Milloy, 1995) conducted the first outcome study examining the effects of community notification. Re-arrests of 90 sex offenders who received the highest level of notification were compared with 90 matched sex offenders who were released prior to the enactment of the law and, thus, were not eligible for community notification. Although at the end of a 54-month period there was no significant difference in re-arrest rates between the two groups, the researchers determined (from survival curves) that sex offenders who were subject to community notification requirements were re-arrested more quickly than those not subject to notification. However, this study examined only recidivism as an outcome and had a very limited sample.

More recent research has continued to evaluate the effects of registration and community notification laws on sex offender recidivism rates. These studies have (a) examined convicted sexual psychopaths (a legal, statutory label, not a psychological label following clinical diagnosis) in an attempt to determine the likelihood that community notification would prevent future sexual offenses (Petrosino & Petrosino, 1999), (b) compared registered sex offenders subject to registration and community notification requirements with convicted sex offenders who would have been subject to such requirements had the laws been in effect at the time of their convictions (Adkins, Huff, Stageberg, Prell, & Musel, 2000), and (c) compared sex offenders who received extensive notification with those who received limited notification (Zevitz, 2006). Despite the differences in methodologies, all of these studies found limited support for the effectiveness of registration and community notification laws to reduce sex offender re-arrest and reconviction rates.

A recent study by Barnoski (2005), however, did find that community notification laws significantly reduced certain types of recidivism by sex offenders in Washington State. Specifically, Barnoski found that the 1990 enactment of Washington's Community Protection Act significantly reduced rates of sexual felony recidivism by sex offenders, and that the 1997 amendment of the notification law significantly reduced rates of both violent felony and sexual felony recidivism by sex offenders. However, this study had a number of weaknesses. First, as with the earlier analysis by Schram and Milloy (1995), it looked only at sex offender recidivism, ignoring the possibility that notification laws had any effect on rates of first-time offending. Second, as the analyses examined rates of recidivism at three separate points in time through percentage comparisons and a binary logistic regression, they did not take into account natural changes in

patterns of offending over time (McDowall & Loftin, 2005). As such, the reductions in offending noted by Barnoski (2005) may have simply been due to historical crime rate trends and, therefore, may have been unrelated to the enactment and amendment of Washington's registration and notification law.

In an attempt to account for any historical trends in crime rates, Walker, Maddan, Vásquez, VanHouten, and Ervin-McCarthy (2005) used time-series analysis to examine the number of rapes reported monthly through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system in 10 states to determine the general deterrent effect of registration and community notification laws. Consistent with previous research, results of their analyses indicated no systematic effects for registration and community notification laws to reduce incidents of sexual victimization. More specifically, there was no significant difference in the number of rapes before and after the passage of registration laws for six out of the ten states examined, and although three states did experience a significant decrease in rapes after the enactment of registration laws, one state experienced a sharp and significant increase. However, as the study did not model any nonsexual offense series, the observed changes could be the result of general interventions directed at all offending (e.g., changes in policing, crime reporting, sentencing) and not specifically a result of the enactment of registration laws. Furthermore, due to limitations of UCR data, the study was not able to model crimes committed by repeat versus first-time sex offenders, thereby not allowing for differential effects of the registration laws on these different offender groups.

Thus, taken as a whole, the results of the various studies cited above support the view of Zevitz (2006) that, "the anticipated preventive benefits of the community notification policy initiative would appear to be limited" (p. 205).

Purpose

Given the lack of conclusive research regarding the effectiveness of registration and community notification laws to increase public safety, the current study sought to build on the extant literature by examining sexual offense arrest rates before and after the enactment of New York State's SORA. Thus, the primary research question was: Are there differences in sexual offense arrest rates before and after the enactment of SORA? Two additional research questions were: (a) Are registration and notification laws decreasing re-arrest rates for convicted sex offenders? and (b) Are registration and notification laws deterring nonregistered offenders from committing registerable sexual offenses?

Method

New York State Registry

New York State, in compliance with federal regulations, established SORA in 1995, which became effective January 21, 1996. Under Correction Law Article 6c, individuals convicted of registerable sexual offenses are required to release specified information to the state, such as their name and current home address. Sex offenders who were convicted, were under probation or parole supervision, or were discharged, paroled, or released on or after January 21, 1996, are mandated to register under this Act (Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2004).

In New York State, sex offenders are classified into three risk levels based on the court's assessment regarding offenders' likelihood to repeat the same or similar registerable offense. Decisions regarding risk levels are made based on, amongst others, offender's relationship to the victim, duration of the offense, use of a weapon, age of the victims, and extent to which the victim was injured. Level 1 represents a low risk of repeat offense; Level 2 indicates a moderate risk of repeat offense; and Level 3 represents a high risk of repeat offense. Risk levels determine both the length of registration as well as the extent of community notification, with Level 2 and Level 3 offenders registering for life and being subjected to the highest extent of community notification practices.

Local law enforcement agencies in communities where sex offenders live have the discretion to decide what, if any, information to release to vulnerable populations related to the nature of the offense committed by the offender. However, only information pertaining to Level 2 and Level 3 offenders can be released to the public. Although SORA did not standardize notification procedures, there are four main forms of community notification: (a) the public sex offender registry Web site, (b) community notification meetings, (c) dissemination of flyers and other mailings, and (d) informal communication with residents or door-to-door visits.

Data Source

Data for this study were retrieved from New York State offender criminal history files, which were extracted by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. These criminal history files contain information regarding characteristics related to arrest, conviction, disposition, and sentencing events. The criminal history files of every offender arrested for a registerable sexual offense between 1986 and 2006 (totaling over 170,000 sexual offense arrests and over 160,000 unique sex offenders) were used in this study.

Data

Data for the analyses consisted of 21 years (252 months) of New York State monthly arrest counts for several types of offending aggregated to the state level.[1] Arrest counts were chosen as the focus for the study as sexual crimes are less likely than nonsexual crimes to be reported to authorities, and many that are reported are never prosecuted (Romeo & Williams, 1985). Thus, using a measure of conviction instead of arrest might considerably underestimate rates of offending. However, it should be noted that simply because an offender was arrested for a sexual offense does not imply the offender was convicted of that crime and, therefore, it is possible that using arrest data produces false-positive results (Romeo & Williams, 1985). Given the serious nature of sexual offenses and the amount of public attention they command, risking a false-positive result (i.e., finding that sex offender registries do reduce rates of sexual offending when they in fact do not) may be more defensible than risking a false-negative result (i.e.,

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[1] Offenses were assigned to a month by the crime date whenever possible, and by the arrest date when a crime date was not available. Of the 894,002 total arrests aggregated for the current study, only 18,366 (2.05%) were missing a crime date.

finding that sex offender registries do not reduce rates of sexual offending when they in fact do).

The monthly arrest counts began with January 1986 (10 years before the enactment of SORA) and ended with December 2006 (11 years after the enactment of SORA). During this time period, New York State enacted no other special legislation to manage sex offenders, thereby allowing for clear interpretation of the impact of SORA's enactment.

In all, 17 different series of data were modeled: 9 test series and 8 comparison series. It is important to note, however, that SORA was amended twice since its 1996 enactment to include more offenses (eight were added in 1999 and seven were added in 2002). As the offenses added in these later amendments have different intervention dates, each of the nine test series modeled in the present study included only those offenses listed in the original 1996 version of SORA.[2] Also, the New York State consolidated criminal history files are top-charged based, meaning they only record the top charge associated with each arrest. Thus, if an offender had been arrested for fraud, robbery, and rape, only the rape charge would be recorded in the consolidated criminal history files. This fact is important to remember, especially with regard to the comparison series (i.e., sexual offenses are almost always the top charge for an arrest, while crimes such as larceny are not).

Test Series

Total number of registerable sex offenses (RSOs).   This series included all arrests for any of the offenses that required registration as of January 1996 in New York State (see SORA, §168a), including rape, incest, sodomy, sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, and promoting sexual performance by a child. The mean number of total RSO arrests per month was 640.73 ($SD = 96.20$), with 169,051 different offenders having been arrested for a RSO from 1986 to 2006.[3]

Total number of rapes.   As many studies and typologies of sex offenders have found rapists and child molesters to be characterized by different offending patterns (e.g., Hood, Shute, Feilzer, & Wilcox, 2002; Knight, Rosenberg, & Schneider, 1985), these types of offending were broken out from the total RSO variable and analyzed separately. Thus, this series included all arrests for rape in the third, second, or first degree (PL §130.25–130.35). According to these statutes, rape in New York State is generally defined as sexual intercourse (forcible or otherwise) either: (a) without the other party's consent, or (b) with a party incapable of giving consent. The mean number of rape arrests per month was 166.42 ($SD = 26.97$).

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[2] Attempts were made to model the offenses added in these later amendments separately (i.e., all the 1999 additions together and all the 2002 additions together), but the small number of monthly arrests for these few offenses made the analyses difficult, if not impossible, to reliably conduct and interpret. Those results that were interpretable, however, were similar to those generated for the original 1996 offenses.

[3] Of the 169,051 different offenders who were arrested for a RSO from 1986 to 2006, 68,617 different offenders (40.59%) were convicted of a RSO.

Total number of child molestations.   The monthly counts of arrests for child molestation were created by summing the monthly arrest counts for several sexual crimes committed against children, including sexual acts against children (PL §130.45–130.50), the use and promotion of children in a sexual performance (PL §263.05–263.15), and the possession of obscene material involving children (PL §263.16). By analyzing arrests for child molestation arrest separately from those for rape, the analyses were able to test whether the significant declines in child sexual abuse observed in the 1990s (Jones, Finkelhor, & Halter, 2006; Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2007) were related (at least in New York State) to the enactment of registration and notification laws. The mean number of child molestation arrests per month was 42.08 (*SD* = 10.42).

RSOs by convicted offenders.   This series included all RSO arrests of offenders who had previously been convicted of a sexual offense. In other words, this series was a measure of general sexual recidivism. Previous conviction of a registerable offense was used as the prerequisite for recidivism rather than previous arrest, as only convicted sex offenders are added to the registry (see SORA, §168a). Thus, to accurately test the effect of registration on already registered offenders (or offenders who would have been registered, for those convicted of a RSO prior to SORA's enactment), the offender had to have a previous RSO conviction. The mean number of RSO arrests of offenders with a prior RSO conviction (i.e., sexual recidivism) per month was 26.43 (*SD* = 10.50), which represents 4.12% of all RSO arrests per month.

Rapes by convicted offenders.   This variable was calculated in the same way as RSOs by convicted sex offenders, but was specific to rape arrests following an RSO conviction. The mean number of rape arrests for offenders with any prior RSO conviction per month was 6.75 (*SD* = 3.64), which represents 4.06% of all rape arrests per month.

Child molestations by convicted offenders.   The mean number of child molestation arrests of offenders with any prior RSO conviction per month was 2.47 (*SD* = 2.00), which represents 5.88% of all child molestation arrests per month.

RSOs by nonconvicted offenders.   To examine the possible deterrent effect of SORA on those who were unregistered at the time of their offense, this series included only RSO arrests of those offenders who had not previously been convicted of a sexual offense. The mean number of RSO arrests of offenders without a prior RSO conviction per month was 614.31 (*SD* = 90.96), which represents 95.88% of all RSO arrests per month.

Rapes by nonconvicted offenders.   The mean number of rape arrests for offenders without any prior RSO conviction per month was 159.67 (*SD* = 25.72), which represents 95.94% of all rape arrests per month.

Child molestations by nonconvicted offenders.   The mean number of child molestation arrests for offenders without any prior RSO conviction per month was 39.61 (*SD* = 9.94), which represents 94.12% of all child molestation arrests per month.

The average number of monthly arrests in New York State for each of these nine series can be found in Figures 1 (RSOs), 2 (rapes), and 3 (child molestations).
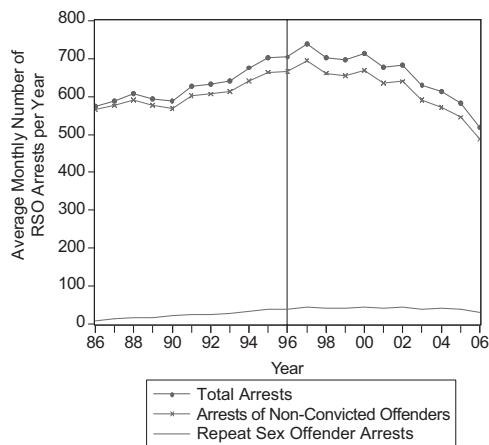
Figure 1. Average monthly registerable sex offense (RSO) arrests per year before and after the enactment of State's Sex Offender Registration Act (SORA).

Comparison Series

As this study specifically sought to examine the effectiveness of New York State's registration and community notification law in reducing sexual offending, it was necessary to examine the effect of other possible influences that might have also reduced rates of sexual offending independent of SORA. For example, changes in policing and sentencing styles over the last 20 years may have also altered offending patterns, such that all types of offending (or all types of interpersonal offending) declined over this period. If this were in fact the case, any reductions in sexual offending may be due to influences other than the enactment of SORA.

Thus, to investigate other influences or alternative explanations for any
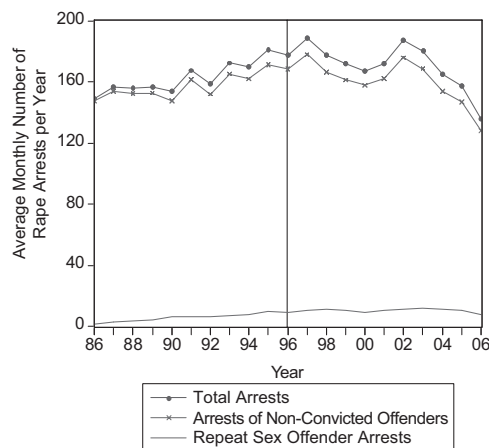
Figure 2. Average monthly rape arrests per year before and after the enactment of State's Sex Offender Registration Act (SORA).
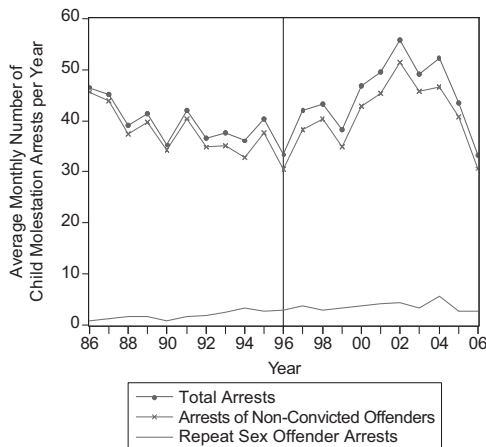
Figure 3. Average monthly child molestation arrests per year before and after the enactment of State's Sex Offender Registration Act (SORA).

changes in sexual offending behavior (and therefore clarify the impact of SORA), comparison series of arrests were examined for four types of nonsexual offenses, two interpersonal crimes (assault and robbery), and two property crimes (burglary and larceny). Because these series were intended to control for influences operating both outside and within the group of offenders included in the sexual offending analyses, each of these offending types were modeled two ways: (a) all arrests for non-sex offenders in New York State (outside group influences), and (b) all arrests for sex offenders in New York State (i.e., those who were arrested for a RSO between 1986 and 2006; within group influences). That is, this second group of comparison series was composed only of non-sexual arrests by sex offenders, and did not include nonsexual arrests by non-sex offenders.

Total number of assaults. This series included all arrests for assault, which in New York State is generally defined as recklessly, negligently, or intentionally causing a person injury (PL §120.00–120.10). The mean number of assault arrests per month for all non-sex offenders in New York State was 5,118.56 (SD = 887.24), whereas for this study's sample of sex offenders it was 453.61 (SD = 84.02).

Total number of robberies. This series included all arrests for robbery, which in New York State is generally defined as using or threatening to use immediate physical force during the commission of a larceny (PL §160.00). The mean number of robbery arrests per month for all non-sex offenders in New York State was 1,570.23 (SD = 381.31), whereas for this study's sample of sex offenders it was 229.72 (SD = 84.06).

Total number of burglaries. This series included all arrests for burglary, which in New York State is generally defined as knowingly and unlawfully entering or remaining in a building with the intent to commit a crime therein (PL §140.20–140.30). The mean number of burglary arrests per month for all non-sex offenders in New York State was 2,425.53 (SD = 374.99), while for this study's sample of sex offenders it was 243.35 (SD = 40.37).

Total number of larcenies. This series included all arrests for larceny, which in New York State is generally defined as the wrongful taking, obtaining, or withholding of property from the property's rightful owner (PL §155.05). The mean number of larceny arrests per month for all non-sex offenders in New York State was 5,273.93 ($SD = 671.25$), whereas for this study's sample of sex offenders it was 210.15 ($SD = 36.31$).

Intervention Variable

The intervention variable (or variable of interest) in the present analysis was the enactment of SORA in January 1996. Thus, a dichotomous variable was created to represent the enactment of SORA, with the variable being coded as zero (*before SORA*) for all months prior to January 1996 and coded as one (*after SORA*) for January 1996 and all months thereafter.

Analysis

Univariate Box-Jenkins interrupted autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) analyses were used to test the effect of SORA's enactment on all 17 offense series. This analytic approach was selected due to its ability to model the autocorrelation almost always found in time series data (McDowall, McCleary, Meidinger, & Hay, 1980). That is, although the analysis in its basic form is a comparison of the number of monthly arrests series before the enactment of SORA versus after the enactment of SORA, simply using ordinary least squares regression (OLS) to conduct the comparison would be unreliable. Specifically, using OLS on autocorrelated data will result in negatively biased standard errors, which then result in artificially and incorrectly inflated *t* values (McDowall et al., 1980). These inflated *t* values lead to deflated significance (*p*) values, meaning the analysis has a much greater chance of returning a false-positive result (i.e., finding significance when there is in fact none). ARIMA time series analyses are, therefore, an improvement over OLS when analyzing time series data, as ARIMA models remove the influence of the autocorrelation from the analysis.

The Box-Jenkins approach to ARIMA analyses involves a three-phase process: (a) identification, (b) estimation, and (c) diagnosis (Box & Jenkins, 1976). In the identification phase, the autocorrelation process or processes (autoregressive, integrated, moving average, or some combination thereof) at work in the data are identified by examining the autocorrelation function (ACF; or correlogram) and partial autocorrelation function (PACF) for the series. Once the autocorrelation process(es) has been identified, a model is then estimated in an attempt to remove the autocorrelation. Following the estimation, the possible presence of residual autocorrelation in the data is investigated in the diagnosis phase through examination of the ACF, PACF, and Ljung-Box Q-statistics for the estimated model. If there is no residual autocorrelation (i.e., all that remains is uncorrelated white-noise), the model is deemed to fit the data. If there is residual autocorrelation, however, the model is deemed to not fit the data and the identification, estimation, and diagnosis phases are repeated.

Results

As stated earlier, the analysis of each series began with an examination of the series' ACF and PACF. In all 17 cases, both the ACF and PACF showed integrated processes to be present in the data. Thus, each series was differenced (i.e., lagged one time period and subtracted from itself) in order to control for the integrated autocorrelation. Differencing the equations also changed the analysis from being one of the raw arrest counts per month to being one of the change in arrest counts from month to month, which does not alter the shape of the analysis or its interpretation (McDowall et al., 1980). The ACFs and PACFs of these differenced variables were then examined, and all showed 12-month seasonal integrated patterns to be at work in the data (which is common when analyzing monthly data, as many crime rates rise and fall with the seasons). This 12-month seasonal integrated autocorrelation was then controlled for by seasonally differencing each of the normally differenced series (i.e., by lagging each series 12 months and subtracting it from itself). The ACFs and PACFs of each series were then clearer of autocorrelation, though they still showed both first-order moving average and first-order 12-month seasonal moving average processes present in the data. Thus, equations were estimated in which the dependent variables (arrest counts per month) were differenced both normally and 12-month seasonally, with each equation including components to control for both the first-order moving average and the first-order 12-month seasonal moving average processes, as well as a constant.[4] At this point the ACFs, PACFs, and Ljung-Box Q-statistics for each series showed no residual autocorrelation at any specific point in the data or in the dataset as a whole, meaning the final model ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$ controlled for all the autocorrelation in the analysis.[5]

Once all the autocorrelation was removed from the analyses (i.e., all that was left was white noise), the dichotomous intervention variable was included in the model. By being coded zero for all months before January 1996 and one for all months afterward, it is essentially a test of whether the average number of monthly arrests before the enactment of SORA differed from those after the enactment. If the coefficient for the variable was positive in an analysis, the number of arrests rose after the enactment of SORA, while a negative coefficient indicated the number of arrests dropped. Before the coefficient for the intervention variable was assessed in any of the analyses, however, the ACFs, PACFs, and Ljung-Box Q-statistics for the equations with the intervention were assessed to see if each remained free from autocorrelation. As in each case the series showed no residual autocorrelation at any specific point in the data or in the dataset as a whole (and the coefficients for both moving average components fit their neces-

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[4] If the constant was found to be insignificant (indicating the integrated process was most likely a random walk), it was removed and the equation was re-estimated in order to make estimation of the standard errors more efficient. Otherwise, if the constant was significant (indicating the integrated process was most likely a stochastic trend and the average number of arrests for that type of crime was significantly different than zero), it was retained in the model.

[5] This model, ARIMA $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$, is sometimes referred to as the airline model (Box & Jenkins, 1976), and is fairly common in practice.

sary parameters), the intervention coefficients could be meaningfully interpreted (see Table 1).

As can be seen in Table 1, none of the intervention coefficients for any of the nine types of sexual offending reached significance and were, therefore, all statistically no different than zero. Likewise, as can be seen in Table 2, seven of the eight intervention coefficients for the comparison series were also insignificant, with only the number of robbery arrests within the sample of sex offenders showing a significant reduction following the enactment of SORA. Specifically, there was an average of 31.32 fewer robberies per month ($p < .05$) committed by those arrested for a RSO between 1986 and 2006 following the enactment of SORA than there was before SORA. This finding should be interpreted with caution, however, as it was the only series of the 17 tested to reach significance. That is, according to probability, 1 out of 17 series should reach the $p < .05$ level of significance purely by chance. If a Bonferroni correction were made to the significance level to account for the increased possibility of committing a Type I error (i.e., a false positive), the observed change in robbery arrests within the sex offender sample pre- and post-SORA would not reach significance.

While this study's finding of significantly reduced rates of robbery within the sample of sex offenders supports one finding of Barnoski (2005; i.e., that the enactment of Washington State's community notification law reduced rates of violent felony recidivism by sex offenders), the null findings with regard to the impact of registration and community notification on assault and sexual recidivism do not. These conflicting findings are likely due to two facts: (a) Barnoski's analytic technique did not account for historical crime trends, and (b) as Barnoski's regressions were performed on autocorrelated data, the coefficient standard errors were

Table 1

Monthly Arrest Averages and Times Series Results by Offender and Offense Type for Test Series

	Monthly arrests, mean (SD)	Percentage of total	Intervention coefficient[a]	t
Registerable sex offenses				
Total	640.73 (96.20)		9.85	0.31
Recidivisms	26.43 (10.50)	4.12	−0.14	−0.05
First-time offenses	614.31 (90.96)	95.88	10.49	0.35
Rapes				
Total	166.42 (26.97)		−1.58	−0.14
Recidivisms	6.75 (3.64)	4.06	0.36	0.50
First-time offenses	159.67 (25.72)	95.94	−3.12	−0.28
Child molestations				
Total	42.08 (10.42)		−10.00	−1.92
Recidivisms	2.47 (2.00)	5.88	0.17	0.26
First-time offenses	39.61 (9.94)	94.12	−8.88	−1.81

Note. All models were of the form autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$, meaning they had both first-order and seasonal first-order integrated and moving average components.
[a] The intervention coefficient represents the average monthly change (after correcting for autocorrelation in the data) in arrests for each offense type after enactment of the Sex Offender Registration Act.

Table 2

Monthly Arrest Averages and Times Series Results by Offense Type for Control Series

	Monthly arrests, mean (SD)	Intervention coefficient[a]	t
All New York State offenders			
Assaults	5,118.56 (887.24)	98.71	0.56
Robberies	1,570.23 (381.31)	−69.44	−0.84
Burglaries	2,425.53 (374.99)	69.47	0.69
Larcenies	5,273.93 (671.25)	−156.45	−0.95
Within the sex offender sample			
Assaults	453.61 (84.02)	−26.90	−1.12
Robberies	229.72 (84.06)	−31.32	−2.04[*]
Burglaries	243.35 (40.37)	−7.68	−0.40
Larcenies	210.15 (36.31)	1.42	0.11

Note. All models were of the form integrated moving average (ARIMA) $(0,1,1)(0,1,1)_{12}$, meaning they had both first-order and seasonal first-order integrated and moving average components.
[a] The intervention coefficient represents the average monthly change (after correcting for autocorrelation in the data) in arrests for each offense type after enactment of the Sex Offender Registration Act.
[*] $p < .05$.

likely deflated and, therefore, appeared more significant than they in fact were (see above). The possibility of a natural drop in the crime rate or some non-sex offender related factor contributing to Barnoski's findings is supported by the fact that Washington State's rate of violent crimes (per 1,000 population) dropped each year from 1995 to 2006, while its rate of property crimes (per 1,000 population) dropped each year from 1995 to 2003 (Washington Statistical Analysis Center, 2008). Thus, it appears likely that the reductions in the sexual and violent felony recidivism of sex offenders observed by Barnoski may have been at least in part due to these trends, and once these trends were controlled for in the present study, the impact of registration and notification laws failed to reach significance.

Finally, to test whether the use of arrest counts was obscuring the impact of SORA's enactment, analyses were also conducted on series for: (a) number of monthly RSO convictions, and (b) the monthly ratio of RSO convictions to RSO arrests. As with the arrest analyses, nine different tests series (i.e., all RSOs, rapes, and child molestations examined by total number, sexual recidivisms, and first-time sex offenses) were modeled for each of these different count types. Although not shown, and as with the arrests series, none of these additional conviction series showed any significant change from before the enactment of SORA to afterward. Thus, it appears that the enactment of SORA had little, if any, impact on rates of general offending in New York State and no significant impact on rates of sexual offending.

Discussion

The present study used 252 months of arrest data and univariate ARIMA time series analyses to evaluate the impact of New York State's SORA. More specif-

ically, the study proposed the general question of whether there are differences in sexual offense arrest rates before and after the enactment of SORA, as well as the two specific questions of: (a) whether registration and notification laws are decreasing re-arrest rates for convicted sex offenders, or (b) whether registration and notification laws are deterring nonregistered offenders from committing registerable sexual offenses. According to the analyses, all three of these questions are answered negatively. That is, results of the analyses indicate that the 1996 enactment of SORA (and thus the beginning of the registry) had no significant impact on rates of total sexual offending, rape, or child molestation, whether viewed as a whole or in terms of offenses committed by first-time sex offenders or those committed by previously convicted sex offenders (i.e., repeat offenders). The only type of offending that was found to have significantly changed following the enactment of SORA was robbery within the present sample of New York State sex offenders (i.e., this finding did not hold for all offenders in New York State), with the number of robberies per month having significantly declined. Given the number of separate analyses conducted for this study (and, therefore, the increased chance of one reaching significance purely by chance), this finding should be interpreted with caution.

The current study also found that 95.9% of all arrests for any RSO, 95.9% of all arrests for rape, and 94.1% of all arrests for child molestation were of first-time sex offenders. Thus, as none of these offenders had any prior convictions for sexual offenses, none of them were on the sex offender registry (or would have been on the registry had it existed) at the time of their offenses. This finding casts doubts on the ability of sex offender registration and notification laws, as well as residency and occupational restriction laws, to actually reduce sexual offending. That is, these laws were specifically designed to limit the ability of convicted sex offenders to re-offend by limiting their opportunities to do so, and it appears that only a small portion of sexual offending (i.e., 4-5%) might be influenced by these legislative measures.

Thus, the results of the present study support those of prior research (e.g., Schram & Milloy, 1995; Walker et al., 2005) and cast serious doubts on the effectiveness of sex offender registries to significantly reduce rates of sexual offending. The limited effectiveness of registration and community notification laws may be due to the fact that these laws were largely based on commonly held myths and misconceptions regarding sexual offenses and sex offenders. First, community members commonly believe that most, if not all, sex offenders will inevitably re-offend (Levenson, Brannon, Fortney, & Baker, 2007; Levenson & Cotter, 2005a). However, as stated earlier, research has found relatively low recidivism rates for sex offenders (ranging from 5% to 19%; Hanson & Bussière, 1998; Langan et al., 2003). Furthermore, offenders without prior sexual offense convictions commit the majority of sexual offenses. In the current study, only about 4% of those arrested for a sexual offense had a prior sexual offense conviction. This finding is significant because it illustrates the limited reach of the sex offender registry. That is, approximately 96% of offenders arrested for sexual offenses have no prior sexual offense convictions and, thus, would not have been on a sex offender registry at the time of the offense.

Second, registration and community notification laws are based on the false assumption that strangers commit most sexual offenses. However, the research

unequivocally finds that sex offenders are more likely to victimize family members, intimate partners, or acquaintances. In fact, according to a Bureau of Justice study (Snyder, 2000), 93% of child sexual abuse victims knew their abuser (34.3% were family members and 58.7% were acquaintances). In addition, approximately 9 out of 10 adult rape or sexual assault victims had a prior relationship with the offender either as a family member, intimate, or acquaintance (Greenfeld, 1997). With most sexual crimes being committed by family members or someone known to the victim, registration laws may be ineffective because they focus, almost exclusively, on sexual offenses committed by strangers. Despite the public perception that sex offenders are strangers stalking playgrounds and other areas where children congregate, the majority of offenses occur in the victims' home or the home of a friend, neighbor, or relative (Greenfeld, 1997).

In addition, some researchers have argued that registration and community notification may, in fact, discourage victims of sexual abuse from reporting the incidents to authorities (Edwards & Hensley, 2001). As previously stated, the vast majority of sexual offense victims know their perpetrator. Although unintentional, community notification can often lead to identification of the victim, especially when the victim is an offender's child. As such, incest victims may not report the offense to avoid dealing with the impact that public notification would have on their family (Freeman-Longo, 1996).

Because registration and community notification laws were based on false assumptions regarding sex offenders and sexual offenses, attention and resources are diverted from the most common types of sexual offenses (those committed by first-time sex offenders and those who have a pre-established relationship with the victim) to ones perpetrated by the stereotypical sex offender. In order to increase the effectiveness of these laws to protect public safety, reactionary policies (regardless of how well intended) should be replaced with policies based on empirical findings. Public education should also play a key role in enhancing the ability of registration and community notification laws to increase public safety. Community members should be taught accurate, scientifically validated information about sex offenders and the true risk they pose to society. Dispelling the myths currently held by the public could have a meaningful impact on effective sex offender management by influencing community leaders and policymakers.

Limitations

The major limitations of this study, as with most studies that use official data sources, are those of data availability. The most notable of these is that the outcome measure, arrest for a registerable sex offense, was only an approximation of the true behavior of interest: sexual offending. As stated earlier, sexual arrest was chosen as the proxy to sexual offending as, of the variables available, it was most likely to show the impact of registration and notification. However, it would be very useful for a study to replicate the analyses presented here with a true measure of offending.

Other limitations are that the analyses do not check for differential impacts of registration and notification laws by geographic area, offender risk level, or victim-offender relationship (e.g., offender and victim knew each other before). It

may be, therefore, that registration and notification laws have had a very strong impact in suburban and rural areas, but not urban areas. (This question is especially interesting as, although analyses in the present study investigate different types of sexual offending in greater detail than previous studies, they do so in only one state.) Likewise, it may be that registration and notification has impacted the offending of less serious (lower risk) offenders, but not more serious (higher risk) offenders. Future studies should investigate such possibilities by including measures of these variables in their analyses.

Conclusion

Sex offenders evoke little sympathy from the public and, as such, the popularity of registration and community notification laws is understandable. However, it is becoming increasingly clear from the growing body of research that registration and community notification laws are not an effective strategy for reducing sexual offenses. In fact, focusing attention and resources on the small number of known, registered sex offenders detracts attention from the more common types of sexual offenses that occur, leaving people vulnerable to sexual abuse and creating a false sense of security.

Furthermore, the results of this and previous studies indicate that sex offender legislation created without empirical research to support its ability (or possible ability) to reduce sexual offending can not only be ineffective and wasteful, but can also have unintended and often negative consequences. For example, community notification and residency restriction laws have been found to make it more difficult for released sex offenders to successfully integrate back into society (Levenson & Cotter, 2005b; Levenson, D'Amora, & Hern, 2007), thereby increasing their risk to re-offend (especially those subject to community notification; Freeman, 2008). Such findings are especially important in light of continuing legislative efforts directed at controlling convicted sex offenders such as the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (2006), which lacks empirical research to support its effectiveness for increasing public safety.

Given the limited resources available for sex offender management, perhaps communities would be better served if their scarce resources were used for sexual abuse prevention initiatives designed to educate the public on the realities of sexual offenses and sex offenders. As Berliner (1996) noted, registration and community notification laws should not replace sexual abuse prevention efforts. Moreover, resources would be better spent on evidence-based sex offender management strategies that have been shown to reduce sexual offending, such as cognitive-behavioral treatment programs for offenders (Lösel & Schmucker, 2005; McGrath et al., 2003).

The overarching goal of sex offender legislation is to make communities safer and reduce the number of people who are sexually victimized. As Prentky (1996) clearly argues, "the singular consideration should be whether community notification will in fact reduce victimization rates or whether it will merely provide a dangerous false sense of security" (p. 297). Given the serious nature of sexual victimizations, policymakers should not be complacent with the current registration and community notification system. Registration and community notification should only be one element of the public response to sexual offending (Berliner,

1996). The question of how society can best be protected from sexual victimization remains, but empirical research, in both previous studies and the current one, indicates that existing registration and community notification laws are largely ineffective.

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