

**BULLET POINTS ON 15-H 5456,
THE SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION BILL**

This bill would implement the federal Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act. It would significantly revise the state's current method for sex offender registration.

* Despite many years of prodding by the federal government, only 17 states have adopted this law. No state in New England has enacted it.

* Failure to adopt this bill would result in the loss of 10% of the state's share of federal Byrne Funds. For FY 2014, that loss amounts to approximately \$85,000. The costs associated with implementing the law would very quickly exceed any Byrne Funds lost. In fact, previous Attorney General Patrick Lynch was quoted as noting the "prohibitive cost" of implementing the legislation. Yet no fiscal analysis of the bill appears to have been done.

* Other states, including New York and Texas, have studied the fiscal issues carefully and concluded that the costs of implementing the program far outweigh the loss of federal funds involved in not doing so, and have therefore decided not to enact the law.

* The bill would subject some offenders as young as 14 years old to a requirement of lifetime registration, and to having their names publicly listed on sex offender notification websites. Because of the federal law's significant and long-term impact on juvenile offenders, groups that deal with youth, including Rhode Island Kids Count, oppose the legislation.

* The bill would impose requirements on past offenders who were not previously subject to registration and notification, and this and other aspects of the bill raise numerous constitutional concerns. Ohio was the first state to enact to enact SORNA, and just two years ago, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled various provisions of the law unconstitutional.

* Under current state law, offenders are classified based on a variety of factors and risk assessment evaluations. This bill would classify the offender's risk based solely on the offense for which he or she was convicted. A recent research report submitted to the National Institutes of Justice concluded that the SORNA classification scheme "is likely to result in a system that is less effective in protecting the public than the classification systems currently implemented in the states studied."

*Sex offender registries are built on myth. First, sex offenders are not more likely to reoffend than other criminal offenders. Second, the overwhelming majority of incidents of child sex abuse is committed by family members or friends or acquaintances, not strangers. Finally, exhaustive studies have found public registries to have little or no impact on reducing crime rates for these offenses.