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Senate of Pennsylvania



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TO: All Senators

FROM: Senator Jane C. Orie 
Senator John C. Rafferty 

SUBJECT: Requiring the use of GPS to track certain sex offenders.

DATE: December 13, 2010

We are planning on re-introducing Senate 827, legislation to require the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) for the following individuals: sexually violent predators; sex offenders who have been convicted of a subsequent sex offense after having been required to register; and individuals required to register under Megan's law and who have been convicted of violating 18 PACS § 4915 (failure to comply with registration of sexual offenders requirements).

This tracking shall be done by either the body supervising the individual's probation or parole or by the Pennsylvania State Police. Costs will be paid by the individual and it shall also be a criminal offense to tamper with or remove the GPS device.

The New Jersey State Parole Board issued a report concerning the GPS Monitoring of Sex Offenders Pilot Project Act. The report listed specific GPS case examples and stated:

- only one of the GPS program's total 225 sex offenders has been implicated in a new sex crime. The sex offender was arrested at the crime scene, a rape that occurred in April 2006. Moreover, the GPS monitoring data was available to aid the investigation, by placing the sex offender at the time and place of the new crime. This initial data suggests the State Parole Board's GPS monitoring has contributed to a significantly lower recidivism rate than nationwide data indicates for high-risk sex offenders.
- GPS monitoring appears to encourage these high-risk sex offenders to control their behavior, and avoid situations that would inspire new crimes.

The Board concluded that: "the ongoing GPS monitoring of New Jersey's highest-risk sex offenders is an essential tool in this initiative. The initial data suggest the State Parole Board's GPS monitoring has contributed to a significantly lower recidivism rate than nationwide data indicates for high-risk sex offenders. The monitoring also provides an invaluable resource for investigations, by providing data that can be compared with the times and places of new sex crimes."

Senate Bill 827 was sponsored by Senators: ORIE, RAFFERTY, PILEGGI, ALLOWAY, WASHINGTON, WARD, ERICKSON, BROWNE, MUSTO, FONTANA, WOZNIAK, STACK and BOSCOLA. If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation please contact Kacie Morrell at 787-6538 or kmorrell@pasen.gov.