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House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Steve Santarsiero

DATE: December 20, 2010

RE: Co-sponsorship of Pennsylvania Kids Act (Former HB 2742 of 2009-2010) to protect children from convicted sex offenders or sexually violent predators online

In the near future, I plan to re-introduce the Pennsylvania Kids Act (Former HB 2742 of 2009-2010) to protect children from convicted sex offenders or sexually violent predators online. This measure is similar to federal legislation enacted in 2008 but yet to be implemented.

The Pennsylvania Kids Act would require convicted sex offenders and sexually violent predators to register with the Pennsylvania State Police any online identities and Internet accounts they might have, including e-mail addresses, personal websites, online community memberships and chat room aliases. The PSP would be required to maintain this information in a searchable database and allow social networking websites, such as MySpace and Facebook, to match identifying information with that of their customers. The websites would then be permitted to block access to such websites by those offenders found in the PSP database.

The bill would also allow a judge to limit the use of the Internet by a registered sex offender whose crime was committed on the Internet, or if Internet use is determined to be an activity leading to the commission of the crime for which the offender was convicted. The use would be limited to online employment-related searches and the offender would be subject to periodic computer inspections and required to install key logging devices at the offender's expense.

As a father and former teacher, I understand the educational value of using the Internet in the classroom and at home. And as the Internet grows and online communities become more popular, sexual predators are free to use this virtually unregulated technology to prey on children and other unsuspecting individuals. Just as we monitor a sex offender's physical home address, we now must monitor his online address and presence.

If you would like to join me in co-sponsoring this important legislation, please contact Kaitlin Mull at 717-787-5475 or via e-mail at kmull@pahouse.net.