Dear Reporter,

I am grateful when a news report is careful to describe events and people in an objective manner. I also appreciate reporters who avoid common biases that people may hold. Thank you for your care in your news reporting.

As you no doubt know, sometimes the media fall short in this regard. This is particularly likely in reports related to people on the sex offense registry. It is easy to reflect the common biases of people in this regard, which are often short of being accurate.

For example, news reporters sometimes assume that people on the registry are all violent child rapists. This is rarely the case, as has been documented in research studies. Many are on the national registry for what would once have been considered minor offenses, such as public urination, streaking in college, or having consensual sex with someone near the legal age of consent.

Without question, such actions violate moral norms as well as laws, but once the offender has paid his or her debt to society, how can continued public humiliation and countless laws be justified that make it difficult to find a job or place to live? Restrictions such as not being allowed to live near a school or inability to visit some public beaches often come to dominate many people’s lives who are on the registry. Numerous research studies have found that children are not safer because of such laws and impede offenders from being productive members of society.

Many people have heard reports that link people on the sex offense registry with murder, violence, and other terrible actions. News of this nature easily perpetuates myths that have nothing to do with the typical registrant. I am not suggesting that you avoid such stories in your reporting, but rather that you consider avoiding making such inferences in stories that include references to other registrants. Repeat offenses by people on the sex offense registry are much rarer than repeat offenses with other kinds of crimes. Most sexual crimes are committed by people who are NOT on the sex offense registry. Almost all registrants try to avoid any attention, avoid any kind of trouble, and are intensely supervised and restricted. For the most part, they simply are trying to rebuild their lives and that of their families.

I am enclosing a summary of Erin Fuchs’ “Seven Surprising Things That Could Make You a Sex Offender” in the *Business Insider*.

I appreciate your reading this letter and hope to correspond with you further.

Because the registry is punitive and draws vigilantes, I cannot use my name at the present time. I hope over time that a trust can be built up between us so that I can share my own experiences in what has become a barbaric police state for me after having already served time in prison and probation/parole.

Sincerely,