Dear Sheriff ,

In 1997, Florida started with 3 registry requirements which have exploded to 52 registry requirements.

Florida is making blanket laws based on rare cases. Example: Because Donald Smith abducted Cherish Periwinkle from a Walmart in Jacksonville using his mother’s car, and then raped and killed her, all Florida registrants must now register any car parked at their residence for 5 days or more. This would include any relative or acquaintance who came to visit their family for 5 days or more, even though the registrant never drives their car. If this law had been in effect when Donald Smith abducted Cherish Periwinkle, it would have done nothing to have stopped him from committing his heinous crime, but now all 27,000 to 28,000 registrants currently living in Florida communities must bear the burden of the Florida legislature’s kneejerk reaction to what Mr. Smith did.

Many current Florida legislators in Tallahassee are not aware of how many registry requirements over the years have been implemented as they were not serving in the legislature when most of the registry requirements were written into law.

Just these past two years, a bill was introduced each year trying to change the definition of a day to “any part of a calendar day”. If the bill had passed either of the past two sessions, a registrant would have had to report as a temporary residence any place where they spent 3 “parts of a calendar day” in the aggregate of a year. This would have included visiting a registrant’s mom on a monthly basis to have lunch with here and any place that a person on the registry might frequent on a regular basis for a few hours at a time (any part of a calendar day).

Also introduced in each of the past two years was a bill that would have required people on the registry to have registered within 24 hours of a stay at a vacation rental, instead of the normal 48 hours. This would have greatly hampered travel within Florida for people on the registry. The FDLE was against these bills as they would have prompted many lawsuits.

With the numerous county/municipality ordinances, Florida state statutes along with the 52 registry requirements, and the federal laws, there are still some politicians who are trying to introduce more laws, none of which will do anything to make children safer, but are being used as political fodder to get re-elected. They are feeding the public with the myth that all people on the registry are dangerous and “highly likely” to sexually re-offend. All research is showing that the majority of people on the registry (many thousands within the state of Florida) will never sexually re-offend, after having been caught and serving time in prison.

I am hoping that the day will come in Florida when law enforcement will engage in a conversation with our legislators to make research-based decisions/policies concerning people with one past sex offense who are not sexually re-offending.

I have enclosed a copy of the current 52 registry requirements that many lawmakers are not even aware exist while they continue to try to pass additional ones that are not research-based and will do nothing to make society safer.

Sincerely,