Dear Sheriff ,

Perpetually punishing someone who offended decades ago is a waste of money and only serves to destabilize them by removing housing opportunities, employment opportunities and making it difficult to successfully reintegrate into the community, thereby actually increasing their chance to re-offend. Instead of trying to forever re-incarcerate people for technical violations of non-crimes, we should instead be investing in programs to stabilize former offenders, support victims and teach all children, parents and the general population to recognize, avoid and stop abuse.

If all society does is focus on incarcerating people for as long as possible, there is not going to be a great reduction in sex offenses against children. Research-based, preventative polices must be implemented.

Lauren’s Kids, which was founded by CEO Florida Senator Lauren Book, has a leaflet placed in all Florida car registration notices, saying, “Child abuse occurs at every socioeconomic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and at all levels of education…but the solution is clear: 95 percent of child sexual abuse is preventable through education & awareness.”

Approximately 10 to 40 billion dollars a year is being spent nationally to monitor the Sex Offense Registry**. (*What You May Not Know about California’s Sex Offender Registry Pamphlet*, page 13; Belzer, 2015)**

As stated in a previous letter, I am not advocating for people who sexually re-offend, but it is not cost effective to continue spending billions of dollars every year in this country to monitor people on the registry who are not sexually re-offending and never will. Much of this money would be better spent on prevention and victims’ services.

In beginning the discussion on how some of the money presently being used to monitor the many non-reoffending registrants could be better spent, I have enclosed some ideas proposed by people who have studied the research in this area. Hopefully, a discussion will begin some day on how to use these evidence-based strategies along with other preventative measures.

Sincerely,