

Titus House Newsletter

Titus House Ministries, PO Box 2376, Tijeras, NM 87059

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Arizona affiliate AZRSOL helps defeat onerous bills source NARSOL

By John C. . . . Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs has vetoed two punitive bills that AZRSOL strongly opposed. One (SB1253) would have required that anyone listed on the sex offense registry who has a child in school must report their registration status to that school, regardless of their risk level. The second (SB1583) would have taken the radical step of placing Level 1 low-risk registered citizens convicted of certain offenses on the state's public sex offense registry.

AZRSOL organized write-in campaigns to members of both the state House and Senate urging them to oppose these bills. We also testified in person against SB1583. Both bills eventually passed along strict party-line votes, prompting AZRSOL to contact Governor Hobbs to urge her veto.

In nixing SB1253, Hobbs noted that there are already adequate safeguards in place regarding registrants with children in school. Since the bill did not address how the information being reported could be used, she said she feared such reporting could lead to these children being harassed.

In opposing SB1583, AZRSOL said the bill would for the first time place on the state's public registry many individuals who had already paid the penalty for their offense, successfully completed their treatment programs, adhered to their numerous registration requirements, and remained offense-free for years and even decades. Employing a widely used evaluation tool, law enforcement had determined they posed little risk to their communities.

We emphasized in our campaign against SB1583 that the American Law Institute—a prestigious group of judges, attorneys, and scholars who in 1962 developed and published The Model Penal Code adapted by many states—is now recommending that access to registries be limited to law enforcement only and that they include only the most serious offenses.

Part of our argument against SB1583 was that considering the growing understanding that registration is ineffective in achieving any of the goals that were expected of it, it is ironic that certain legislators in Arizona continue trying to expand it even more. It certainly raises the question of whether these efforts are based more on a desire to punish past offenses rather than work to prevent new ones.

The Democratic Party minority report on SB1583 outlined their reasons for opposing the bill, citing among other issues the retroactive nature of the bill and the potential for shame and harassment it posed to registrants and their families. The report used a [document posted on AZRSOL's website](#) in support of their arguments. We are glad they took advantage of the resources we have to offer and that AZRSOL made it into the legislative history. It shows at least some legislators are listening!

AZRSOL thanks everyone in Arizona who heeded the call to voice their opposition to these punitive bills. Their efforts played a key role in blocking them from becoming law and show that our concerted actions really can have an impact!



Sex offender sweep in Victorville nets 13 arrests

Over 50 registered sex offenders were contacted and several were arrested during a weekend sweep at multiple locations in Victorville.

The sex offender compliance operation was conducted on Saturday, June 24 by Victorville Sheriff's Station and California State Parole personnel. Deputies and parole agents arrested 13 registered sex

offenders on suspicion of various allegations, including failing to register as a sex offender, outstanding warrants, and parole violations.

Additionally, deputies submitted reports to the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office for 17 people who failed to register as a sex offender and were unable to be found by law enforcement.

There are nearly 260 registered sex offenders in Victorville, and about 450 between Adelanto, Apple Valley and Hesperia, according to the California Megan's Law website. An estimated 60 sex offenders in Lucerne Valley, 85 in Phelan/Pinon Hills, and 95 among Barstow, Hinkley and Yermo.

Inmates Need Internet to Prepare for Life After Prison

Source: wired.com 6/30/23

I've been in federal prison for 17 years. During that time, I have watched flip phones become iPhones, EVs become ubiquitous, and AI start to take over the world—albeit not quite the way Terminator envisioned it (yet). Still, I have been largely unable to use that technology myself. I could only read about it in magazines and newspapers, watching the 21st century unfold using 17th-century methods. I didn't physically hold a smart device until the US Federal Bureau of Prisons started selling tablets—last year.

This isn't all that surprising. The Bureau of Prisons is resistant to change and sensitive to criticism. In 2008 it finally replaced antiquated monitors in supermax prisons with new TVs, but officials limited those to black-and-white picture mode so

they could tell the public that they hadn't provided the luxury of color to prisoners. A combination of the BOP's hypersensitivity to public perception and congressional pressure to keep inmates in a no-frills environment has resulted in prisoners being years, if not decades, behind the rest of society.

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To function in a world littered with fake news, political propaganda, and emotion disguised as fact, you need to be able to do research and challenge the noise. In here, that option isn't readily available. For the most part, all of our information comes from broadcast news. Exposure to partisan news sources without the ability to fact-check is a recipe for disaster. While we do have access to magazines and newspapers, they cost money, so most prisoners just opt to watch cable

TV. Any group of people exposed to a single news source for years without any other input is at risk of radicalization.

What's more, limited access to technology hinders incarcerated people from setting themselves up for success when they reenter society. Education is the most effective means of reducing recidivism. Simply finishing a GED reduces a prisoner's chances of coming back to prison dramatically. If they finish a four-year degree, their chances of returning drop below 8 percent. On the off chance that they earn a graduate degree, the odds are effectively zero. And yet, a college education is becoming increasingly out of reach; most schools that offer distance learning have transitioned to online-only formats, which are generally inaccessible to prisoners.



From Rage to Reason: Why We Need Sex Crime Laws Based on Facts, Not Fear (Bloomsbury, 2023), by Emily Horowitz.

In this timely and extensively researched book, sociologist Emily Horowitz shows how current sex-offense policies in the United States create new forms of harm and prevent those who have caused harm from the process of constructive repentance or contributing to society after punishment. Horowitz also illustrates the failure of criminal justice responses to social problems. Sharing detailed narratives from the experiences of those on registries and their loved ones, Horowitz reveals the social impact and cycle of violence that results from dehumanizing and banishing those who have already been held accountable.

From Rage to Reason offers a new perspective on how and why false claims about sex offenses became so pervasive and how these myths fostered ineffective policies that have little to do with the reality of most sexual abuse. It argues that to truly prevent sexual abuse, we must unearth the sources of these misunderstandings, debunk these claims in a systematic way, and have frank and genuine discussions about the limits of legal responses to complex social problems.

Reviews

“This may be the bravest book you have ever read. Horowitz’s meticulous interviews with people on sex offender registries returns a modicum of humanity not just to them but, more importantly, to the rest of us. As she aptly describes, registries are utterly useless for preventing new sex crimes. All they do is sentence to social and civil death people who have already served their time of punishment and labored to repent. We can ill afford to deny rights and humanity to anyone in our culture. To do so cuts us all at an Achilles heel that very few are willing to acknowledge. Horowitz won’t let us look away.” —*Debbie Nathan, Prize-winning Journalist, Author of Sybil Exposed: The Extraordinary Story Behind the Famous Multiple Personality Case & Satan’s Silence: Ritual Abuse And The Making Of A Modern American Witch Hunt*

“The compelling stories Horowitz tells in *From Rage to Reason* bring home, more powerfully than could any statistical analysis, the systematic and gratuitous harms generated by America’s unique program of government-sponsored shunning of people who have already been fully punished for a

sexual offense. Her stories show how the senseless barriers registry laws erect to gainful employment, adequate housing, and normal parenting often destroy the registrants’ families along with their futures, while contributing nothing to public safety. These are stories we need to hear.” —*Ira Mark Ellman, Distinguished Affiliated Scholar, Center for the Study of Law and Society, University of California, Berkeley*

“*From Rage to Reason* offers an unvarnished look at the crippling realities of life on the sex offense registry. Crafted from over 100 in-depth interviews, *From Rage to Reason* is storytelling at its best, vividly portraying the needless abuse and punishment directed at those society deems to be “others.”” —*Catherine L. Carpenter, Arleigh M. Woods and William T. Woods Chair, Southwestern Law School and President, Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws*

SOURCE: *From Rage to Reason: Why We Need Sex Crime Laws Based on Facts, Not Fear* (Bloomsbury, 2023), by Emily Horowitz.



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Hebrew 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Remember if you change your address you need to let us know if you want to continue to receive this newsletter



"SO, THESE THREE LITTLE MICE ARE BLIND AND THE FARMER'S WIFE COMES ALONG AND CUTS OFF THEIR TAILS WITH A CARVING KNIFE!? WHO WRITES THIS STUFF STEPHEN KING?"

Hello from Don & Alice

Help us help you. In order to answer your letters that you send to us we need to be able to read them. Some of your handwriting cannot be read. We therefore, ask you to see if you have a friend there in prison who has good handwriting to write the letter for you. In addition, we need to understand your name and address to be able to write to you. Please include your whole address on the envelope and inside on the letter, please **PRINT**. Also remember we do NOT handle "legal questions", we are a Christian organization. Please do not send us names of family and friends to look up and try to find them for you. We know this is important to you but we do not have the time nor the resources to do this for you. We would like to but cannot. We want to be of help to you while you are in prison and when you get out. Your letters should be short but informative. Let us know your prayer needs, how we can pray for you.

We are doing well up here in the mountains. It has been very hot these past days. We are looking forward to some rain. It has been

a hot, busy, beautiful summer. Yesterday, I looked out the window and saw a big brown bear walking in our backyard. We also see deer from time to time. In addition, we cannot forget about the coyotes we see. We did not have a garden this year. It seems like all we can grow is a pile of weeds. Our vehicles are still running okay. Alice's car has almost 300,000 miles on it. I have a rabbit and two doves. One of my doves was sick and I took my bird Larry to the Vet a couple of days ago. It cost me \$135.00 for a \$20 bird. Larry's last name is Bird. There used to be a basketball player called Larry Bird, it is a play on his name. I am not looking forward to cutting all the wood this fall for winter for our wood burning stove.

We are suppose to have record breaking heat this summer. Wherever you live tell us how it is like. How did you stay cool? Our friends in southern New Mexico would probably like to know.

Please keep my son Joshua in your prayers, he is going through some hard times right now. Alice's family is coming out to visit her this month, August. Keep them in prayer for safe traveling.



Circle of Concern has gone ZOOM

Circle of Concern is aimed at breaking down isolation and fear by providing a safe place for registrants and their loved ones to get together, build community, and learn ways to step out and take charge of their lives and overcome the stigma they face. The Circle of Concern is a group of concerned registered citizens, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on **Sunday, August 20, 2023** at 3 pm—4 p.m. MST (Mountain Standard Time). We will meet on Zoom. We encourage and try to help each other. It is a safe place to share our strengths and struggles. We hope you will join us. If you are planning to attend call Don at (505) 315-7940.. He will send you the link to join by computer or phone. You can contact him at the number above or at donmagicjohnston@gmail.com