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May 6, 2020

Judiciary Committee  
Michigan State House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

**Via Email: [Ncapone@house.mi.gov](mailto:Ncapone@house.mi.gov)**

Re: HB 5679

Dear Judiciary Committee Members:

I ask that you to reconsider passing HR 5679. I am a practicing attorney in Michigan and I have observed, first hand, the damage that SORA has done to registrants. One of my clients has been on the Michigan Sex Offender Registry for over ten years. In that time, he has tried to rebuild his life and re-establish his professional career with no success. No one will hire him, as all employers do background checks and even if they only go back ten years, all check the Michigan Sex Offender Registry. He has been subjected to telephone calls with death threats, ongoing harassment by several of his neighbors and hate mail. Someone who found out he was on registry tried to extort money from him by threatening to make false reports of criminal sexual conduct to the local police. In fact, this person broke into his home and assaulted him causing him severe physical harm which required immediate surgery to repair the damage. He has not fully recovered from the damages to his arm. This is something most citizens never experience. And now if HR5679 passes, which contains many of the same provisions as the current law, including a lifetime registration, which is based on offense not rehabilitation, he will never be gainfully employed and will in all probability die with his name on the registry.

HR 5679 also includes the same school safety zones provision that is in the current legislation that was declared unconstitutional under the United States Constitution. This provision will only invite more litigation and waste taxpayer funds so desperately needed elsewhere in this state. Further my client will have to leave his home which he has lived in for 8 years and owns. Landlords will not rent to him, and immediate sale of his home in the middle of the Corona Virus Pandemic will not occur nor will it occur quickly in the best of circumstances. Homes do not sell and close overnight. The Michigan Constitution addresses the issue of fairness. How can it be fair if a person serves the sentence decided by the courts, the purpose of which is punishment and rehabilitation, when the registry becomes the source of further punishment and harm. Regulation is not intended to be punishment, but many provisions of SORA have had the effect of being punishment. The fact that he will be forced to move, as will so many others, is a form of punishment.

The Michigan branch of the American Civil Liberties Union has tried to work with the legislature to draft fair and equitable legislation which would remove the punishment aspect of the law while serving the needs of the public. Why has the legislature failed to do this as was ordered in John Doe etal vs Snyder. And why is the legislature holding hearings on HR 5679 now when we are in the middle of the worst health crisis to affect the State of Michigan and the United States as a whole. By holding these

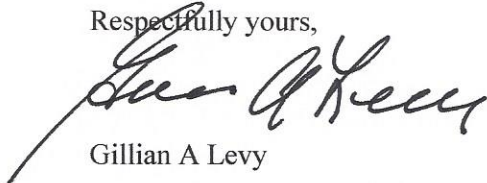
Judiciary Committee

page 2

hearings now, the legislature is effectively eliminating many people from coming forth to testify as it would mean violating a direct order of the Governor to leave their homes.

Instead of holding hearings now, I encourage you to work with Michigan branch of the American Civil Liberties Union and adopt a law in conformity with the model law drafted by the American Law Institute. A fair and equitable law will benefit the general public and the 40,000 persons on the registry.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gillian A Levy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gillian A Levy