BACKGROUND MATERIAL

November 16, 2026

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ashlesha Naik

From: Director AZRSOL <contact@azrsol.org>
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2026 2:33 PM
To: Arizona Sex Offender Management Board
Subject: Subject: Request to Distribute to Board Members: Patty Wetterling's Documented Position on Sex Offender Registries

Categories: Background Material for Board Packet

Dear Arizona SOMB Staff,

I attended today's meeting and am writing about the presentation. The speaker referred to Patty Wetterling in a way that suggested she supports the sex offender registry as it exists today. The public record shows otherwise. I respectfully ask that this summary be distributed to all board members so the board has an accurate picture of her position.

WHO SHE IS
After her 11-year-old son Jacob was abducted in Minnesota in 1989, Ms. Wetterling lobbied for the first registries. Minnesota created its registry in 1991, and the federal Jacob Wetterling Act of 1994 required every state to keep one. She intended it as a narrow tool for law enforcement. Public notification (Megan's Law, 1996) and broad expansion (Adam Walsh Act, 2006) came later.

One key fact: the man who confessed in 2016 to killing Jacob had never been convicted of a sex crime. He would not have been on any registry.

HER PUBLIC RECORD
- 2007: She sent a sharply critical letter to U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales about the dilution of registration laws. She also spoke on Minnesota Public Radio about teenagers registered for consensual relationships.
- 2013: City Pages profiled her as one of the most unlikely voices questioning sex offender laws.
- 2016: She told APM Reports that lifelong labeling without community support does not work. She said she had "turned 180 (degrees)" from her earlier view.
- 2021: She backed a push in the Minnesota Legislature to reform the registry and remove juveniles. She argued the registry grew during periods of panic, when research on reoffending was thin.
- 2022: She served on Minnesota's legislative working group, which recommended removing most children from the registry. She stated it was never intended to hold 10-year-olds.

WHAT SHE ASKS FOR
- Removing children and most juveniles from the registry
- A narrower registry focused on real risk, not low-level conduct
- Policy based on research rather than panic
- Treatment and reintegration instead of lifelong labeling and isolation
- Greater investment in prevention

ACCURATE FRAMING
Ms. Wetterling has not called for abolishing registries, and she remains firm on accountability. However, the person most responsible for creating registries has said for years that the current system has gone far beyond what she intended and needs major reform. Presenting her as a supporter of the registry as it exists today misrepresents her views.

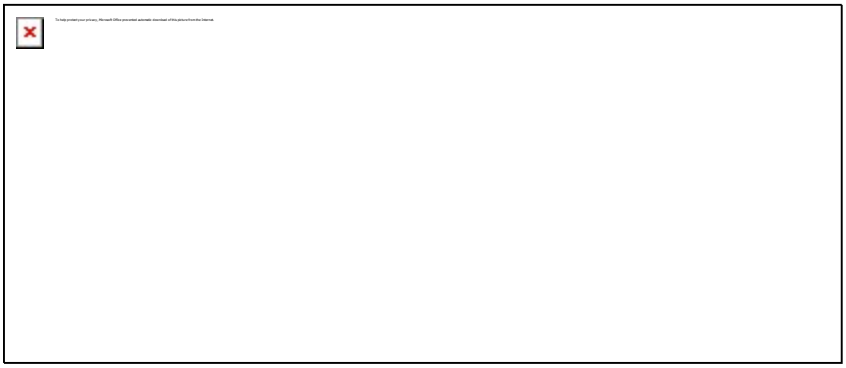
SOURCES
- APM Reports (Oct 4, 2016): https://www.apmreports.org/story/2016/10/04/sex-offender-registries-wetterling-abduction
- Star Tribune (Mar 19, 2021): https://www.startribune.com/decades-after-wetterling-abduction-a-growing-push-to-take-juveniles-off-state-s-predatory-registry/600034964/
- Mankato Free Press editorial (Mar 2021): https://www.nujournal.com/opinion/letters/2021/03/30/other-editors-283/
- Associated Press (Mar 5, 2022): https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/crime/group-pushes-to-take-children-off-minnesotas-predatory-offender-registry/ar-AAUF5BH
- Minnesota Predatory Offender Working Group Report (2022): https://www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2022/mandated/220154.pdf

I appreciate the board's commitment to accurate, evidence-based policy, and I ask that this information be shared with all members before the next meeting.

Respectfully,

Patricia Borden

Patricia & Terry Borden, Directors



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w: *www.azrsol.org*



w: www.narsol.org

2

Ashlesha Naik

From: Gary [redacted]
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2026 3:47 PM
To: Director AZRSOL
Cc: Arizona Sex Offender Management Board
Subject: Re: Subject: Request to Distribute to Board Members: Patty Wetterling's Documented Position on Sex Offender Registries

Categories: Background Material for Board Packet

Hi Pat,

Bravo—very well said indeed.

The question, of course, is whether the board is ready to hear the truth or if they prefer to remain in their cocoon. Time will tell.

Best,
Gary

Gary W. Hardy, PhD
Co-Founder and Executive Director



On Mon, Oct 26, 2026 at 2:32 PM Director AZRSOL <contact@azrsol.org> wrote:

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>
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- Mankato Free Press editorial (Mar 2021): https://www.nujournal.com/opinion/letters/2021/03/30/other-editors-283/
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Respectfully,

Patricia Borden

Patricia & Terry Borden, Directors

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Donate

w: www.narsol.org

Ashlesha Naik

From: Kim Drogosz [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2026 10:58 AM
To: Arizona Sex Offender Management Board
Subject: ATSA

Categories: Background Material for Board Packet

Halloween & Sex Crime: Myth vs. Reality

Please share with the board as this is relevant to the conversation yesterday regarding SORNA.

Best

Kim

Halloween & Sex Crime: Myth vs. Reality
blog.atsa.com

Jill S. Levenson, Ph.D., LCSW
Associate Professor of Social Work
Barry University
Miami Shores, FL

It is almost Halloween, and as we begin to feel a chill in the air in the northern hemisphere, we also feel the excitement of that annual ritual of trick or treating. But while children look forward to a night of ghouls, ghosts, goblins and goodies, parents ponder the presence of real-life demons in the neighborhood: registered sex offenders. States, municipalities, and parole departments have adopted policies banning known sex offenders from Halloween activities (or, in some jurisdictions, from even leaving their homes on Halloween), based on the concern that they pose an increased risk to children on this day. So, my colleagues and I (Chaffin, Levenson, Letourneau, & Stern, 2009) set out to test this assumption...

Using national incident-based reporting system (NIBRS) crime report data from 1997 through 2005, we examined 67,045 non-familial sex crimes against children age 12 and younger. Halloween rates were compared to expectations based on time, seasonality and weekday periodicity. There were no significant increases in sex crimes on or around Halloween, and Halloween incidents did not demonstrate unusual case characteristics. Findings did not vary in the years prior to and after these policies became popular. If these policies were to have an effect on overall Halloween victimization, we would expect that the rates of offenses on Halloween would show a greater decline over time relative to the rates for other days. In order to test whether there

may have been greater reductions in sex offense rates on Halloween relative to other days over the nine-year span, a year-by-Halloween interaction term was added to the model. No statistically significant differences were found.

We then examined over 5 million crimes that took place in 30 states on or around Halloween in 2005. The most common types of crime on Halloween and adjacent days were theft (32%), destruction or vandalism of property (21%), assault (19%) and burglary (9%). Vandalism and property destruction accounted for a greater proportion of crime around Halloween compared to other days of the year (21% vs. 14% of all reports). Sex crimes of all types accounted for slightly over 1% of all Halloween crime. Non-familial sex crimes against children age 12 and under accounted for less than .2% (2 out of every thousand crimes) of all Halloween crime incidents.

Other risks to children are much more salient on Halloween. According to the Center for Disease Control, children ages 5 to 14 are four times more likely to be killed by a pedestrian/motor-vehicle accident on Halloween than on any other day of the year. These findings call into question the justification for diverting law enforcement resources away from more prevalent public safety concerns on Halloween.

The disregard for evidence when it comes to sex offender policies is not unique to Halloween. We know that copious resources are expended for registration and notification (SORN) systems in the U.S., despite nearly two dozen research studies suggesting that SORN policies are responsible for little, if any, appreciable decline in sex crime rates or sex offense recidivism (see, for example, Ackerman, Sacks, & Greenberg, 2012; Agan, 2011; Letourneau, Levenson, Bandyopadhyay, Sinha, & Armstrong, 2010; Prescott & Rockoff, 2011; Sandler, Freeman, & Socia, 2008; Tewksbury, Jennings, & Zgoba, 2012; Vasquez, Maddan, & Walker, 2008; Zgoba, Witt, Dalessandro, & Veysey, 2009). Many other studies have documented the unintended consequences of these laws, including stigmatization, marginalization, and seemingly insurmountable reintegration obstacles to stable housing and employment (Levenson & D'Amora, 2007; Mercado, Alvarez, & Levenson, 2008; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2009). The impact of residential restrictions on housing availability, transience, and homelessness is well documented (Levenson, Ackerman, Socia, & Harris, 2014; Zandbergen & Hart, 2009), as is the lack of evidence indicating that residential proximity to schools and other child oriented venues is correlated with risk for sexual recidivism (Colombino, Mercado, Levenson, & Jeglic, 2011; Duwe, Donnay, & Tewksbury, 2008; Zandbergen, Levenson, & Hart, 2010).

Some scholars have opined that sex offender policies are designed to accomplish both instrumental and symbolic objectives, and that understanding both is essential in the continuing dialogue about SORN laws and prevention of sexual violence (Sample, Evans, & Anderson, 2011). Policy enactment can serve to inspire and reinforce social solidarity by uniting against

a common enemy (Roots, 2004). Sex offender laws send a clear message that sexual victimization will not be tolerated and that politicians are willing to address public safety concerns (Sample, et al., 2011; Sample & Kadleck, 2008). Sample et al. (2011) speculated that symbolic policies might achieve instrumental effects over time -- perhaps measured by a wider range of outcomes beyond recidivism -- but that in the cost/benefit analysis, the symbolic expression of zero tolerance for sexual violence will always outweigh offender rights, fiscal considerations, and empirical testing.

But policy analysis requires a continuous process of evaluation that measures progress toward intended goals as well as unanticipated consequences that might prove contrary to the best interests of the community. Levenson and D'Amora (2007) asserted that ignoring evidence is similar to Hans Christian Andersen's story of the *Emperor's New Clothes* in which the king paraded around town nude, fooled into wearing invisible clothes that purportedly could be seen by only an enlightened few. Similarly, in the absence of compelling evidence indicating that these policies reduce sexual reoffending, attention should be paid to mounting proof of reintegration obstacles fostered by these laws.

Lest some critics suggest that by pointing out the limitations of these laws I am demonstrating a lack of concern for the safety of children, I'd argue that we are all on the same side. We all want to live in safer communities and I agree that public awareness generated by these laws has led to important dialogue about intolerance of sexual violence. But as tax-paying citizens, don't we also want our resources to be utilized in ways that are most likely to achieve the expected goals? And don't social scientists have an obligation to help inform strategies designed to enhance the public good?

Enactment of social policies should consider scientific evidence, and policies are most likely to be successful when they incorporate research findings into their development and implementation. A more reasoned approach (Tabachnick & Klein, 2011) to sex offender policies would utilize empirically derived risk assessment tools to create classification systems that target more aggressive monitoring and tighter restrictions toward those who pose the greatest threat to public safety. In this way, laws could more effectively identify and manage higher-risk offenders within a more cost-efficient allocation of resources. As well, the collateral consequences of community protection policies could be minimized and sex offenders could be better enabled to engage in a law-abiding and prosocial lifestyle. Most sex offenders will ultimately be returned to the community, and when they are, it behooves us to facilitate reintegrative strategies that rely on empirical research to inform community protection. In fact, the unintended consequences of these laws might undermine their very purpose. After all, when people have nothing to lose, they begin to behave accordingly.

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SAJRT Blog at 8:51 AM

Share

5 comments:

1. 

ValigatorOctober 27, 2014 at 5:09 AM

Every Halloween this topic comes up and Every Halloween we have multiple examples of how Jill Levenson touts this holiday as a non issue. Well this Halloween she wont get away with it. http://www.wsiltv.com/news/local/Sex-Offender-Spotted-Arrested-at-Murphysboro-Park-280453532.html

Reply

Replies

1. 

SAJRT Blog October 28, 2014 at 10:21 PM

Valigator, Thank you for your comment. Dr. Levenson's research and commentary is about how law enforcement often takes extraordinary measures to contain registered sex offenders on Halloween, and that policies for the "Halloween roundup" are not supported by research. The link you provided is evidence of the "roundup," not of children being abused on Halloween. The clip actually supports the writer's thesis. The "Halloween roundup," where it occurs, is not effectively making communities safer. Prevention efforts should target every day of the year.

Reply

2.

AnonymousOctober 27, 2014 at 2:02 PM

But how do you convince state governments and city councils that don't seem to let FACTS influence their opinions or decisions?

Reply

3.

AnonymousOctober 28, 2014 at 5:57 AM

Facts are when you google Halloween and sex offenders and read the pages and pages of instances of where Offenders are and have manipulated themselves into situations where their access to children is heightened.

Reply

Replies

1. 

SAJRT Blog October 28, 2014 at 10:37 PM

Anonymous, We did just that - and what a Google search using those words found was page after page of stories about law enforcement rounding up registered sex offenders on Halloween. We stopped looking after 100 results, and not a single story about child sexual abuse occurring on

Halloween. Here is a link to some of the research cited by Dr. Levenson. Thanks for your comment. http://theparson.net/so/LevensonSexCrimesonHalloween2009.pdf

Reply

Sent from my iPhone

Ashlesha Naik

From: Director AZRSOL <contact@azrsol.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2026 1:25 PM
To: Arizona Sex Offender Management Board
Subject: Public Comment from Yesterday's Meeting – Request for Inclusion in Minutes
Attachments: October 28, 2026 SOMB.docx

Categories: Background Material for Board Packet

Dear Chair and Members of the Board,

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak at yesterday's meeting. I have attached a copy of my remarks and respectfully ask that they be included in the meeting minutes.

As I mentioned, I would be glad to share my book, Condemned Without Cause: Autism, Injustice, and 75 Years Behind Bars, with any Board member who would like a copy. Please just let me know the address where you'd like it mailed.

Thank you for your time and your work on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Patricia & Terry Borden, Directors

AZRSOL
Arizonans for Rational Sex Offense Laws
EDUCATION · ADVOCACY · SUPPORT

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Donate

w: www.narsol.org

Good afternoon, Chair and members of the Board. Thank you for having me back.

Many of you know me as Director of Arizonans for Rational Sex Offense Laws. I have always kept my family out of that work. Today I am setting that aside, because I have written a book: Condemned Without Cause: Autism, Injustice, and 75 Years Behind Bars. It tells of my 20-year fight against my son Stephen's wrongful conviction and 75-year sentence. I share it because it shows how the system can fail, and this Board helps shape that system.

The book describes four pitfalls.

First, laws passed without enough attention to the Constitution. Stephen was convicted under a statute, unique to Arizona and Hawaii, that unconstitutionally shifted the burden of proof to the defense. In 2018, partly because of Stephen's case, the Legislature fixed it, but not retroactively. Stephen still serves time under a law Arizona itself corrected.

Second, disproportionate sentences. Stephen had no prior record. The alleged conduct was momentary touching, over clothing, in public. Mandatory consecutive sentencing turned that into seventy-five years, flat time, longer than many people serve for taking a life. Yet jurors improperly discussed sentencing and were told he would get "a year or two."

Third, disability mistaken for guilt. Stephen was diagnosed with autism last year, nearly two decades after trial. In court, his flat expression, limited eye contact and literal answers were read as signs of guilt. No one in that courtroom understood what they were seeing.

Fourth, systems that cannot correct themselves. A federal judge granted Stephen relief in 2017. After four productive years home, he was sent back to prison on procedural grounds. One senior federal judge wrote that his case "reflects poorly on our legal system"; another urged clemency. The Clemency Board denied him a meaningful hearing.

As you advise on policy, remember Stephen and ask four questions: Is the law constitutional? Is the punishment proportionate? Have we screened for disability? And when we get it wrong, can we fix it?

I would be glad to leave copies of the book with the Board. Thank you.

Ashlesha Naik

From: Department of Public Safety <do_not_reply@azdps.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 6, 2026 1:06 AM
To: Arizona Sex Offender Management Board
Subject: Webform submission from: SOMB Call to the Public - Written Public Comment

Categories: Call to the Public Written Comments

Caution: The following message contains information provided by an anonymous user through an online form. Please treat the below message with caution, avoid clicking links, downloading attachments, or replying with personal information.

Arizona Department of Public Safety
2222 W. Encanto Blvd.
Phoenix, AZ 85009

Submitted on Fri, 11/06/2026 - 01:05

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Your Name
Michelle Stevenson

Email Address
[redacted]

What part of the agenda does your written comment relate to?
An item NOT on the agenda

Please provide your written comment in the field below.
Arizona Sex Offender Management Board,

My name is Michelle Stevenson. My pronouns are she/her.

I am writing this letter because of a conversation between SOMB board member James Hanratty and SOMB counsel Baldner in the October 26, 2026 meeting.

“Jim Hanratty: ... if somebody wants to badmouth somebody in the public, and it has nothing to do with the sex offender, it has nothing to do with somebody on probation, somebody who's not been convicted of a sex crime, and it isn't even relevant to any kind of...

Baldner: Sure.

Jim Hanratty: treatment or assessment of sex offending, but they're allowed to spew slanderous comments about somebody in the public who may or may not be part of this board. Is that really relevant and germane to what we do? Or do we just let them go ahead and spew?

Baldner: Well, again, I think people...need to be cut off, but I can't do that. That's a function of the chair.”

I would like to remind Baldner and Hanratty that the definition of “treatment provider” as it pertains to board members was discussed in detail by the Arizona Sex Offender Management Board and voted on in the November 2025 board meeting. Licensure of board members was explicitly brought up by both you, Hanratty, and your good friend, former member Morey at that time.

Baldner, you gave an opinion in November 2025 that defining an unlicensed person as a treatment provider shouldn’t be a problem. Baldner, I am honestly curious if you still hold that opinion? Do you think it is okay that a person who has surrendered their doctor

license be defined as a treatment provider for the purposes of ARS 13-3828? It is unfortunate that you do seem to think it's legally okay to silence me. It is my opinion that silencing me when I'm talking about this issue would infringe on my first amendment constitutional rights as viewpoint discrimination.

I'd also like to remind the entire board that legally for something to be slander, it has to be false. In case you haven't seen it, here is former board member Morey's stipulated surrender of his medical license:
https://omb.oregon.gov/Clients/ORMB/OrderDocuments/0a3f84b1-a9b6-4520-83a0-ea2a7163d947.pdf

This stipulated order is public record in Oregon. It was also linked in the Arizona Mirror's article about Morey's appointment to and removal from the Sex Offender Management Board.

Thank you,
Michelle Stevenson

I understand this notice
YES, I Understand this Notice

Arizona Department of Public Safety
2222 W. Encanto Blvd.
Phoenix, AZ 85009

(602) 223-2000

https://www.azdps.gov/



Ashlesha Naik

From: Department of Public Safety <do_not_reply@azdps.gov>
Sent: Sunday, November 8, 2026 7:48 PM
To: Arizona Sex Offender Management Board
Subject: Webform submission from: SOMB Call to the Public - Written Public Comment

Categories: Call to the Public Written Comments

Caution: The following message contains information provided by an anonymous user through an online form. Please treat the below message with caution, avoid clicking links, downloading attachments, or replying with personal information.

Arizona Department of Public Safety
2222 W. Encanto Blvd.
Phoenix, AZ 85009

Submitted on Sun, 11/08/2026 - 19:47

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Your Name
ML

Email Address
[redacted]

What part of the agenda does your written comment relate to?
An item NOT on the agenda

Please provide your written comment in the field below.
Please remove my name and email from this submission.

Dear AZSOMB Members,

I respectfully request that the Board place an item on an upcoming agenda to examine the financial costs and law enforcement resources devoted to Arizona's sex offender registry.

Although Arizona uses a three-level risk classification system, registration remains lifelong for most adults, with limited opportunities for relief. Recent legislation has also expanded public notification to include certain Level 1 individuals with Dangerous Crimes Against Children (DCAC) convictions, even when their offenses occurred decades ago.

California's system offers an opportunity to examine whether allowing long-term, offense-free individuals to petition for removal could reduce costs while maintaining public safety.

I suggest inviting a representative from the Arizona Department of Public Safety to address:

* Annual registry administration and enforcement costs.
* Resources devoted to Level 1 registrants compared with Levels 2 and 3.
* Potential savings from allowing judicial review of lifetime registration requirements.

I am asking the Board to examine whether Arizona's current system makes the best use of taxpayer dollars and law enforcement resources.

Public safety and fiscal responsibility should go hand in hand.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

I understand this notice
YES, I Understand this Notice

Arizona Department of Public Safety
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Phoenix, AZ 85009

(602) 223-2000

https://www.azdps.gov/

