

Dear Chair Barker and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I strongly support legislation that will protect children and adults from sex trafficking. However, HB 2218, which provides for putting the names of low to moderate risk sex traffickers on Oregon's public sex offender registry will not promote that goal.

Studies have shown that public registries of sex offenders do nothing to prevent sex crimes and make minors safer. These registries are "feel good" laws that mislead people into believing they provide protection. Indeed, sex offender registries are counterproductive, since a registry containing tens of thousands of names makes it impossible for authorities to focus on those who are truly dangerous. Expanding the registry to include those who have served their sentences and present low to moderate risk of reoffending will exacerbate the problem. In addition, sex offender registries have been used as a template for enacting registries for animal abusers, child and elder abusers, drug offenders, identity thieves, white collar criminals, and suspected terrorists in other states. Our current president has proposed a registry for all Muslims in the U.S.

This is a slippery slope. Laws that restrict the constitutional liberties of people who have served their sentences based on an unsubstantiated fear of possible future behavior should be frightening to anyone who believes in democracy, the Bill of Rights, and the rule of law especially in today's climate.

I urge you to vote no on HB 2218.

Respectfully,

Judith Armatta, J.D.

7903 SE Salmon St.

Portland, Oregon 97215

juditharmatta@gmail.com