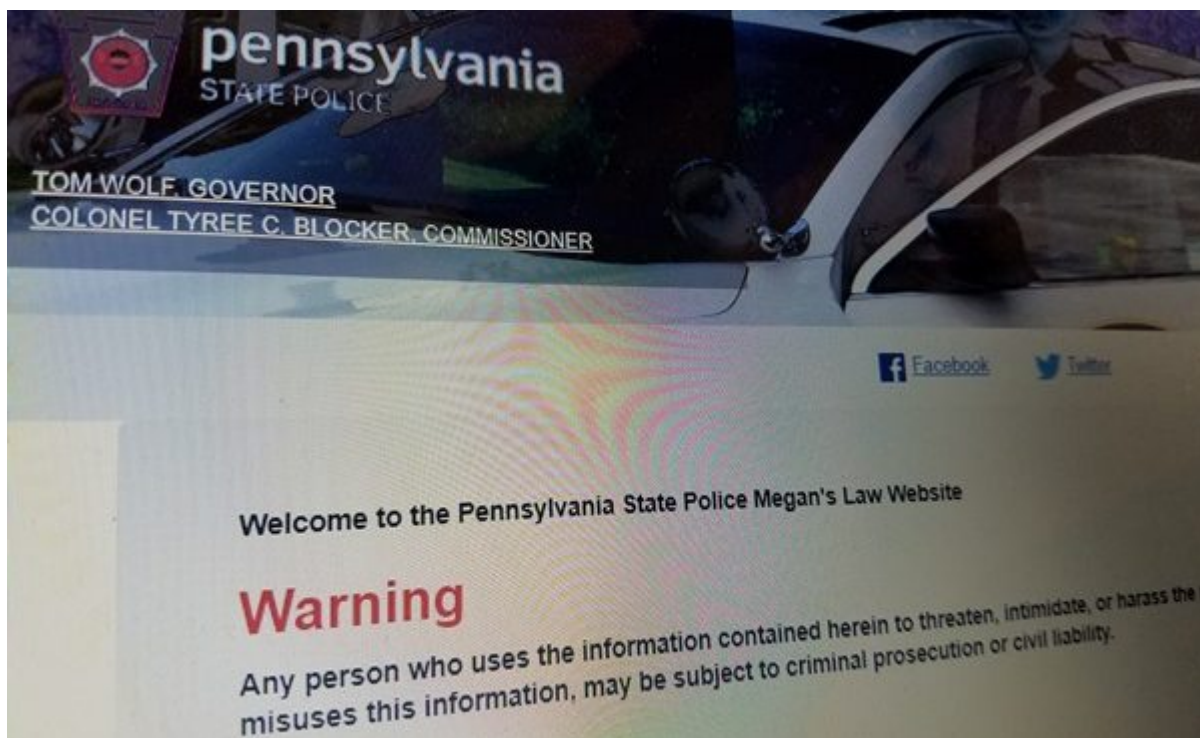


How many things are wrong about the sex offender registry?

written by Sandy | July 23, 2017



By Sandy . . .

What's wrong with the registry?

Trick question, right? I mean, what ISN'T wrong with the registry? We could make lists all day long. However, some things seem more wrong than others, and I have come up with a doozy.

In Pennsylvania, citizens are on that state's sex offender registry for committing "custodial interference." In other words, non-custodial parents kept their own children longer than allowed during visitation or, in some cases, took off with them for a few extra hours or days or possibly even longer. There was no sex. There was no abuse. There was no assault. The children were located, safe and sound, and

returned to the legal custodian. But these parents are included on a registry whose purpose purports to be to protect the public from those who have previously committed sexual assault or abuse.

These are cases that are written up by law enforcement as "custody disputes" or "interfering with child custody." This addition to the criminal code of sexual offenses was made in December of 2012 and carries a registration requirement of 15 years as a Megan's Law child sex offender.

The convicted parents are subject to all of the usual requirements and restrictions of the registry. [One mom reports](#) additionally that "Potential employers are wary of her sex offender status... Landlords are reluctant to rent to her. Daycare center operators don't want her son. A homeless shelter turned her away...a transitional housing program rescinded her admission after two days because the program's sponsor was uncomfortable after learning she was a sex offender."

Louisiana is the only other state in the union which requires sex offender registration for those convicted of custodial interference, and they make an exception when the defendant is the parent of the child whose custody was interfered with.

The sex offender registry is not the answer under any circumstances. It is not found to increase public safety, reduce re-offense, protect future victims, enhance rehabilitation, reduce child sexual abuse, or provide prevention.

How much less of an answer is it when it is used in situations where a defendant has not even been accused or charged with any type of sexual offense whatsoever?