

Megan's Law waste of time, money, report shows

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By CBS News

This study and this article were done in 2009 but are as true, timely, and essential today as then.

A study examining sex offenses in the state where Megan's Law was created says it hasn't deterred repeat offenses.

The report released Thursday finds that registering sex offenders in New Jersey does make it easier to find offenders once they are accused of a sex crime.

However, by comparing arrest rates before and after the sex offender registration law was passed, the study found no significant difference between statistics before and after Megan's Law was passed.

The study also compared sex offenders rates with violent crimes and drug offense rates in comparable time periods, and

did not find any discrepancy with sex offense rates post-Megan's law.

"Because sex offense rates began to decline well before the passage of Megan's Law, the legislation itself cannot be the cause of the drop in general," said the report, "[Megan's Law: Assessing the Practical and Monetary Efficacy](#)," prepared for the Department of Corrections' Research and Evaluation Unit. "It may, in fact, be the case that continuing reductions in sex offending in New Jersey, as well as across the nation, are a reflection of greater societal changes."

According to the authors, measures of recidivism rates, community tenure (the amount of time before a re-arrest), and harm reduction (decreased sexual offending), revealed no significant differences between cohorts.

"Despite wide community support for these laws, there is little evidence to date, including this study, to support a claim that Megan's Law is effective in reducing either new first-time sex offenses or sexual re-offenses," the report states.

The report also said that, because it saw no discernible difference made by implementing Megan's Law, the cost of administering the law (approximately \$3.9 million in 2007) should be reexamined.

Editor's note: and how much more is the cost today? and how many millions have been wasted since then – and will continue to be?

[Read the full article here.](#)

[See the study here.](#)