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CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATION STRONGLY PROTESTS TREATMENT OF FORMER SEX OFFENDER

Albuquerque, NM / January 18, 2015—Greg Poston, 62, of Dayton, Ohio, is dying of cancer, and his condition is worsening daily. One of his four siblings, a brother, Roger, also has cancer. Both Greg and Roger have long dreamed of seeing the Grand Canyon, but it is a dream they had given up on until recently.

Their physician, Dr. Emily Vannorsdall, contacted the Dream Foundation, a national organization headquartered in Santa Barbara, California, that grants the dreams of adults with life-threatening diseases. The Dream Foundation agreed to grant a four-day trip to the Grand Canyon not only for Greg and Roger but also for their three siblings. All four of the Poston brothers are U.S. Military Veterans, and their local Veterans' Service Commission partnered with the Dream Foundation in offering the family trip.

When the action of the Foundation became known, they started getting phone calls informing them that Greg was on the public sex offender registry and thus should not receive this gift. In 2007 he was convicted of two counts of sexual imposition of a child, a third degree felony. Greg served a year of his two-year sentence and was granted judicial release in early 2009.

Personnel at the Dream Foundation investigated, and after talking with community members and some of the victims' family members, made the decision to revoke the gift to Greg and released this statement: " 'After speaking with members of this individual's community, and consulting with our legal counsel and board of directors, Dream Foundation does not believe it is appropriate to proceed in the fulfillment of this individual's dream.' "

As soon as this became public, Reform Sex Offender Laws, Inc.—RSOL—wrote the key personnel at the Dream Foundation protesting the decision. RSOL is an organization that advocates for and encourages the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of former sex offenders into a law-abiding society. We strongly object to continued consequences that amount to additional punishment after a registered citizen has satisfied his term of court-ordered punishment.

The response from the Dream Foundation reiterated their position and their reasoning in withdrawing Greg's trip. According to their spokesperson Tristen Layton, they felt they should honor the wishes of the victims and their families. We have for years now lived with the consequences of basing legislation on emotions and victim-driven reactions rather than facts and evidence, and studies show these consequences to be ineffective—indeed, often harmful—in improving public safety.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RATIONAL SEXUAL OFFENSE LAWS
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RSOL's reply to the Dream Foundation reiterated our strong disagreement with allowing former victims the right to inflict or be instrumental in inflicting perpetual punishment, even to and beyond the grave if they could, on those who have paid their legal debt. At this point, for Greg, there is not even the pretense of justice but only that of revenge and additional punishment. There was no response from the foundation.

RSOL is examining options for further action. Updates will follow as soon as possible.

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