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## **CIVIL RIGHTS GROUP DEMANDS REPEAL OF RESIDENCY RESTRICTIONS; SUPPORTS LAWSUIT PROHIBITING ENFORCEMENT**

Albuquerque, NM / October 7, 2015—RSOL, Inc.—a leading civil rights group advocating on behalf of registered citizens and their families—called today for the immediate repeal of Rhode Island's newest law designed to segregate registrants, deprive them of their homes and property, and further erode the constitutional rights of American citizens.

Citing the poor effectiveness of residency restrictions to promote public safety as being well documented (See 1, below), and even more prolific research demonstrating the negative consequences of such legislation (See 2, below), RSOL, Inc. went a step further by offering to join any substantive litigation challenging the legitimacy of Rhode Island's adoption of Jim Crow styled legislation displacing registrants and their families and stipulating where they may live and work.

“The people tasked with enforcing these laws do not even agree with them (See 3, below). And many journalists have written in opposition to them (See 4, below). More recently, the editorial board of *The New York Times* emphatically criticized such restrictions as useless (See 5, below),” stated Brenda V. Jones, RSOL's Executive Director.

“Yet in June of this year, the General Assembly of Rhode Island, against all evidence to the contrary, chose to increase the existing 300-foot restriction as the distance that Level III registrants must live from a school to 1000 feet and to apply the restriction retroactively,” Jones said.

RSOL believes that the imminent enforcement of this new law will wreak havoc in the lives of registered citizens across the state but especially in the urban areas. In Providence, only a tiny fraction of the city remains available for registrants and their families to legally live.

Worth noting is that, according to the *Providence Journal*, the majority of those affected have “lived quietly in the neighborhoods for years, checked on by probation officers and police who knew them by name.” Some own their homes. Many are senior citizens who have lived offense free for many, many years (See 6, below).

This law is not supported by “law enforcers, civil-rights advocates, supporters of victims of sexual assault [or] experts who study sex-offender management; [they] say the expanded ban could actually decrease public safety by forcing offenders to move frequently or become homeless, destabilizing their lives.”

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RATIONAL SEXUAL OFFENSE LAWS**  
**Fighting to restore dignity & constitutional rights to millions.**

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Jones condemned the law as misguided and noted, "Many states following the research have enacted no such general restrictions against those on the registry, and other jurisdictions that previously enacted them have repealed them, are reconsidering them, or have had their retroactive application struck down by the courts." Jones concluded by saying, "RSOL will partner with civil rights attorneys in Rhode Island and seek to block enforcement of this unjust law."

RSOL, Inc. (reformsexoffenderlaws.org) advocates for laws based on facts and evidence and for policies that support the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of law abiding, former sex offenders into society. We therefore call upon the legislature of Rhode Island—and indeed of all states—to take immediate action to repeal, neutralize, or otherwise make ineffective all blanket residency restrictions against registered citizens. When they are deemed appropriate and needed for a specific registrant, let them be enacted, with evidence of need, on a one-on-one, individualized basis.

"This is an action whose time is fully upon us. We must repeal blanket sex offender residency restrictions. They do not protect the public but instead do further damage to citizens who are already struggling to recover their lives," Jones concluded.

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1. [http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p\\_mla\\_apa\\_research\\_citation/3/8/1/7/2/p381725\\_in dex.html?phpsessid=k0121r724vks5t97lcis1mh5a1](http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/3/8/1/7/2/p381725_in dex.html?phpsessid=k0121r724vks5t97lcis1mh5a1)
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3. <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/getdoc/bce869a7-6027-4166-bc80-1766e78a1765/Datz-Amy-Research-paper-pdf.aspx>
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6. <http://www.providencejournal.com/article/20151003/NEWS/151009727>