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RSOL PREPARED TO CHALLENGE LAW ADDING “UNIQUE IDENTIFIERS” TO AMERICAN CITIZENS’ PASSPORTS

Washington, DC / February 3, 2016—Reform Sex Offender Laws, Inc. is disappointed that the U.S. House of Representatives concurred with HR 515 as amended by the Senate on February 1. HR 515 will require, for the first time in the history of the United States, the addition of “unique identifiers” to the passports of American citizens. The U.S. Senate added the historic requirement as a *Floor Amendment* offered by Senator Mitch McConnell on December 17, 2015.

RSOL believes that the Senate amendment requiring the unique identifier may be in violation of *Wooley v Maynard*, 430 U.S. 705 (1997), which holds that the government cannot force someone to physically carry the government’s message. The passports with their identifying marks would be doing just that.

“The citizens of this nation should be afraid, very afraid, that a unique identifier will soon be added to their passports,” stated Brenda Jones, RSOL’s E.D. “Who will be the next targeted group? ”As passed by Congress, the Secretary of State is required to add a “unique identifier” to the passports of citizens convicted of a sex offense involving a minor. The list of offenses includes non-violent, non-contact offenses and even some that are non-sexual. “Passports today are used as a primary form of identification, not just to enter a foreign country,” stated Jones. “A passport symbol that identifies an individual as a registered sex offender places that person and others traveling with him or her at significant risk of physical harm.”

In addition, HR 515 establishes a center designed to notify foreign countries that the individual plans to visit that he has been convicted of a sex offense involving a minor. This notification will be sent regardless of whether the individual has been deemed to be rehabilitated by a state and therefore is no longer required to register as a sex offender.

RSOL is gravely concerned that the notification provisions of HR 515 have the potential to harm thousands of Americans who have completed their sentences and are no longer required to register as sex offenders. In such instances, the federal government will substitute its judgment, which will not be based upon an investigation of the individual, for the judgment of a state government that has conducted such an investigation. Furthermore, no evidence exists suggesting that the passage of this bill or its subsequent enforcement will address the issue for which it is intended.

National RSOL and many of its state organizations lobbied in opposition to the passage of HR 515. Before it becomes law, the President must approve the legislation.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RATIONAL SEXUAL OFFENSE LAWS

Fighting to restore dignity & constitutional rights to millions.

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