

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 2133

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COUNTY AFFAIRS

Hearing Date: April 20, 2021 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

Steven Mintz, Professor

Self

Galveston, TX

Those convicted of sexual assault need to be able to find jobs and a place to live. Residency restrictions like those spelled out in HB 2133 only serve to worsen the plight of the formerly incarcerated and their families as well. Such laws make no distinction between those guilty of the worst offenses and those whose violations pose no threat of recidivism and who have served their time. Please, do not make the path to rehabilitation impossible.

Sandy Hrozek

Self/ volunteer with the National Assc. for Rational Sexual Offense Laws -- NARSOL

Houston, TX

I oppose HB 2133 and all legislation that would create restricted areas for those with a sexual offense conviction.

Residency and proximity restrictions do not result in higher safety. They are ineffective and have unintended consequences. These consequences include lack of housing opportunities for those on the registry, interference with successful re-entry into society, and harmful destruction to families by requiring some to move out of their homes. This approach has been adopted before in the errant belief that people who have a geographical closeness have a higher level of offense. That is not accurate. What we do know is:

- “Stranger Danger” is rare. The danger comes family members, authority figures such as teachers and youth sponsors, and peers, none of whom are likely to be on the registry.
- Approximately 50% of offences take place in the victim’s own home.
- Study after study shows no evidence that residency or proximity restrictions result in reduced offenses. They serve as barriers as mentioned above.
- Georgia, New Jersey, California, Michigan, Connecticut, and other states have had these restrictions overturned or sharply curtailed in court cases ruling them as unconstitutional and punishment.

Please vote against HB 2133.

Thank you.

Alberta Starowicz

self

Lewisville, TX

This is about my opposition to HB 2133 that is being heard by the House County Affairs Committee this Tuesday, 4/20/2021. My son is an inmate at a Federal Correction Institution. He met the medical requirements to qualify for Compassionate Release for Covid-19. But due to Residency Restrictions he is not allowed to live at our house or any place close so we can support him. So he remained at the facility and came down with Covid-19. As a parent, I was heartbroken.

It is already hard enough finding a place to live for people on the registry. If HB 2133 is passed, it will be almost impossible. Please consider requesting an interim study of residency restrictions before passing a law that would cause more harm than good.

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

To be productive citizens again, they need a safe place to live, a support system and a job. Don't make that even harder. Thank you for reading my email and please think of my son and so many more in the same situation at the hearing. Then please vote no.

Chris Rainbolt, Mr.

Self

Carrollton, TX

OPPOSE HB2133

Access to stable housing increases the chances of successful reentry to society. Residency restrictions do the opposite and erode public safety.

Sara Frahm, Mrs.

Self Retired

Austin, TX

Each individual needs to be discussed on his/her own merits. The blanket coverage for all sex offenders is so inaccurate. There are very few who will ever offend again. To have life long registration shows the lack of confidence in the prison system and the training they receive. It labels people for life, leaving no room for repentance and restoration. It is just wrong from a moral and religious point of view. A person who has had one offense needs to be seen differently than someone who has repeated the offense over and over.

Richard Carden

Self

Houston, TX

To Members of the Committee:

I am writing to oppose HB 2133. I was there to testify in front of you in regards to HB 1862 so I will not repeat my testimony as those words that day mirror just some of the reasons I oppose this bill as well.

Again, there is no data, no research, no studies that show that Residency and Proximity restrictions do anything for public safety. They have shown however through research and data to among other things create homelessness, poverty, and family separation.

If nothing else look to the recommendation made by the Texas Legislature itself.

When in January 2011 the The Legislative Budget Board submitted to 82nd Legislature their finding and recommendation in regards to Residency Restrictions.

On Page 355 it states:

"There is little evidence supporting the theory that residency restrictions improve public safety. Sex offenders are less likely to reoffend when they reconnect with family and the community, find jobs, and live with a support network."

Their recommendation regarding residency restrictions?

It can be found on page 356 of the same document.

"Recommendation 3 would amend statute to prohibit local jurisdictions from establishing additional local residency restrictions for sex offenders beyond the requirement the Board of Pardons and Paroles identified for the offender."

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

The findings and recommendations back was backed up by evidence that has only increased since that recommendation 10 years ago.

Just a few weeks ago the Michigan legislature erased their residency restrictions.

"The requirements that registered individuals not live, work, or loiter within 1000 feet of school property have been eliminated. See Public Act 295 of 2020, repealing MCL 28.733, 28.734, 28.735, and 28.736."

There has been mention of an interim study on registry reform discussed and actually promised over the last few years. Before enacting laws that have been proven to have a negative impact on the community that type of study needs to be done.

There is more evidence to provide against this bill and others like it. More than this space can hold. The authors of these bills give you no research, study, or data to show how residency restrictions do anything for public safety. Their only reason they give is they want to impose them because someone other town or city gets to do it. That is not enough of a reason to impose bad legislation.

To copy bad legislation to create more bad legislation just because someone currently is able to do it is poor governance.

I ask you to vote no on HB 2133.

Thanks for your consideration.

Richard Carden

Gabrielle Guevara

Self

Dickinson, TX

Let's keep our children safe. EVERYWHERE!

Winston Cochran

Self

League City, TX

I have been a licensed Texas lawyer since 1979. I am Board-certified in Criminal Law and Criminal Appellate Law, with experience as a prosecutor and as defense counsel. I have represented several persons who have been convicted of sexual offenses. I oppose H.B. 2133 because of concerns over how it will be applied to travel.

(1) The bill chills a citizen's constitutional right of ""assembly," which in modern jurisprudence is often called a right of "association." Association requires travel. Regulation of a citizen's act of being "within a specified distance of a child safety zone" is, in effect, a restriction of travel. That is particularly so in small communities where schools, parks, day care centers, etc. are likely to be close to the main road through the community. The "exemption" created in subsections (f) and (g) offers no protection to a traveler because it addresses residency but not travel.

(2) Subsection (d) creates an "affirmative defense to prosecution" for a "legitimate" purpose. The term "legitimate" in this context is vague. In most instances a police officer will have discretion to decide what is "legitimate." Such vagueness effectively allows the police to decide what the law means, and it deprives a citizen of fair notice. That runs afoul of Supreme Court case law, notably *Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville*, 405 U.S. 156 (1972).

(3) The bill makes it a traveler's burden to raise an "affirmative defense" in order to claim that he or she has a "legitimate" purpose. That is a trial mechanism, only available after a citizen has been arrested and forced to make arrangements for bail. That

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

is financially burdensome and may itself encompass additional restrictions. This placement of the burden discourages travel for some legitimate purposes, which are not all "work-related." It is a classic example of "prior restraint" of a constitutional right.

Clayton Smith, Commissioner

Burnet County E.S.D. 7

Burnet, TX

There is no need for such a blanket bill to cover all ESD's since most are doing the right thing. ESD Commissioners can be removed by the same County Commissioners & Judges that appointed if any are doing something wrong.

Sharon McGowen, BSN,RN,CMSRN,CWOCN

self

Midland, TX

I OPPOSE HB 1233

I am a family member of a registrant and have seen first hand the difficulties imposed by the registry for the families. Registrants who have served their sentence should be able to live and take care of their own families, not be forced into being homeless along with their kids being ostracized. I personally know at least 11 young men ranging in age from 12 to 24 at the time of them being charged with a sex offense. Their offenses range from 1 text, making a bad choice, (lots of young people do) to being falsely accused. People who are asking for this legislation need to be first educated with research that WILL debunk the need for it and the reminder that THEY could be the next one with a family member on the registry EXTREMELY easy!

Roy McGowen

self

Midland, TX

Please OPPOSE HB 1233

97% of new sex crimes are committed by people the child knows and trust, NOT a registered sex offender (they have an extremely low sex offense recidivism rate). Imagine you are a registrant who was charged with a crime as a young person and have served your time. If you are that registrant who now has a family and your child wants to go to the elementary Halloween party. YOU are putting that child at risk because he has to be dropped off 500-1000 foot or more from the school because that is the restriction. As fast as the sex offender list is growing that could be your grandchild next!! Please vote no and take time to look at research and a map that has all of the residency and child zone restrictions in yellow. Make law based on research, not hysteria!

Angela Gray

Self - Medical

San Leon, TX

ALL counties, incorporated and unincorporated, should all have the same system of safety in regards to sex offenders.

Sven Hendrickson

Self

Taylor, TX

I'm opposed to this bill. The registry was for public notice, yet it is exclusively a punitive law. These type of bills create more

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

hate, discrimination, and drive more retaliation towards people who have served their time. People should be removed from the registry and then there would be no need to restrict and destroy family's lives.

Larry Woolley
Johnson County
CLEBURNE, TX

Mr. Chairman and Members of the County Affairs Committee:

I am submitting my comments in support of HB 2133. I serve as a county commissioner in suburban Johnson County where we are experiencing an alarming number of registered sex offenders moving to our county. As of today's date, we have 608 registered sex offenders residing in unincorporated Johnson County. This does not include the numbers that are residing in cities. Many new residents are moving here from the DFW metroplex as well as coming from other states. We are also experiencing significant residential and commercial growth in the unincorporated part of the county which has resulted in registered sex offenders often working or residing near places where children frequent such as schools and daycare facilities. We also have experienced "group homes" that house multiple sex offenders very close to a school facility. There was even at least one occasion when letters were sent to nearby residents of a "High Risk" sex offender moving to an area due to an early release from incarceration. This offender was living within 400 feet of a school facility. The authority given cities in establishing "Child Safety Zones" desperately needs to be expanded to counties to offer the same level of protection to a child outside the city limits. This authority for all cities was created in the 85th Texas Legislature in 2017 with the passing of HB 1111. Our Commissioners Court passed a resolution requesting this authority be granted to Texas counties in June, 2018 prior to the last session. In addition, this resolution has passed through the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas and has statewide support.

Simply put, a child that resides and plays in the unincorporated part of the county deserves the same protection he/she would get inside the city limits.

I hope and pray that this committee strongly consider and support the passage of HB 2133.

Larry Woolley
lwoolley@johnsoncountytexas.org

Stephen Hicks
self, engineer
Liberty Hill, TX

I am writing to OPPOSE HB 2133. When residency restrictions were first enacted, numerous studies began to measure the impact on criminal behavior and the unintended consequences of these laws. Time and time again, these studies by universities and state criminal justice departments have shown that residency restrictions do not increase safety, but instead have numerous unintended consequences including homelessness, separation of family members, increased financial hardships for families, and others. Residency restrictions have been enacted with the hope of a reduction in crime. But this hope is based on multiple pieces of bad data: First, the thought that sex offender recidivism is high -- but recidivism of sex offenders is the lowest of any crime save murder. Second, the thought that sex offenses are generally committed by a stranger to the victim who stalks them from the shadows -- the truth is that most sex crimes are committed by individuals in an offender's circle of family and acquaintances. And third that sex offenses are committed by sex offenders -- the vast majority of new sex crimes are perpetrated by individuals not on the registry. It's no wonder that residency restriction laws are ineffective and cause harm: they are based on faulty assumptions. If you would like to learn more and read the numerous studies showing the ineffectiveness and societal harm from residency restrictions, please feel free to reach out and I will supply more information. Thank you.

Sherry Robinson
Self
Woodway, TX

I strongly oppose HB 2133. When lawmakers continue to push more and more restrictions on registered citizens, it is clear that you need an interim study concerning sex offenses and former offenders. There is nothing, no study, no facts I have read that support residency restrictions or child safety zones, rather the opposite. Such restrictions, however, have unintended

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

consequences such as homelessness and divided families.

Look at the research and you will learn that very few registered citizens repeat a sex crime, and children are usually harmed by a person they know, rarely by a stranger.

I believe that you want to help children and families. Registered citizens have families. Don't their children matter? Please study the issue, so that your decisions help rather than harm.

Please follow the facts and kill HB 2133.

Sincerely,

Sherry Robinson

Charles Ruiz

Myself

San Antonio, TX

For the life of me, I cannot understand why there are so many new bills being submitted about child safety zones, targeting people who have committed a sex offense. It should be illegal to submit such a bill without a shred of evidence. In fact all the facts and studies shown to date all point in the opposite direction. These types of "crimes" have the lowest recidivism rate other than murder. So why such a flood of restrictions for persons of sex offenses? My only conclusion would be that "people who dislike something in others is what they hate most about themselves." In other words, the ones pointing the finger are just as guilty, or have had tendencies towards the like. It would be a change of pace should those voting on these bills, would start asking for proof or some kind of evidence that supports any harsh or rash changes directed towards persons being affected by such change, to include the persons family/s and children. When these unsupported bills pass it only creates more opportunities for a person to reoffend and not by choice, rather for survival. Please bare in mind, this also affects all the families because they are related to or are married to, to include the children of the (person who committed a sex offense). Especially when the person is the breadwinner of the family...

Will someone please stand up and do the right thing by denying such harsh and ridiculous bills. Without being afraid of appearing to be chummy with persons who have sex offense records? For the record, even the oldest book known to man, "the bible," records about these same crimes. So its not new or taboo. It's just history repeating itself. That's what we should be focusing on, stop repeating history. This is insanity. Focus on educating the causes and nibbling it in the bud. Instead of repeatedly punishing a person for the same offense. Do the right thing someone, please.

That's all I have to say about that.

Debbie Boswell

Self

Round Rock, TX

There is no research supporting residency restrictions for those required to register. This makes it harder for families to stay together, which also lend support to these registrants. Housing is hard to find, which increases the homeless population. This is a feel-good bill based on emotion- never a valid reason.

Mary Bandy, Dr.

Self

San Antonio, TX

I am opposed to HB2133"

Because these types of restrictions harm entire families including the children of registered people. As a former Texas public school administrator I saw families torn apart due to residency restrictions.

Because tax payer dollars could be better spent on prevention and healing. The vast majority of sex offenses are committed by someone already known to the victim-not by a stranger

Because most new sex offenses are committed by someone who is not on the registry.

Because pushing people into homelessness is inhumane

If we truly want people to succeed, they need to have a home, a support system, and a job.

Because decades of research have shown that residency restrictions do not enhance public safety.

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

Texas lists close to 100,000 people on the public sexual offense registry. Residency restrictions do not enhance public safety. They create impossible situations for those who are trying to re-enter society, find suitable housing, find and maintain a job, raise families, and pay bills. Registered people have already been banished from entire cities because of wide-spread ordinances. And now, they may be limited from finding housing outside of the cities. Where exactly are they supposed to live? Please consider supporting families and keeping them together. It is with great urgency that I urge you to vote no on advancing HB 1862. Thank you for your service to Texas. Sincerely,

Mary E. Bandy, EdD.

Please oppose this bill.

Catherine Cannon

self

Weatherford, TX

OPPOSE: You people in Austin continually every 2 years propose and pass legislation that harms entire families. This bill is one of those bills and there have been many Texans that have explained this to you. Please do something true and helpful. Do NOT support or vote for this hateful bill. Do something right, do NOT SUPPORT HB2133 proposed by Rep. Ellzey. Rep. Ellzey please stop legislating from emotion and fear, rather use evidence and fact. KILL THIS BILL

sharon cuellar

self

Wylie, TX

I am strongly opposed to any new restrictions pertaining to registered citizens. ALL of these laws are counterproductive and only are made in a sense of false safety and the appearance of the writer being tough on crime. Stop it. . It is hard enough already for these citizens as well as their families to find suitable, affordable housing. Stop pushing them out and into the streets. They are not a danger and you are doing no more than creating fear mongering. Research your facts, look at the recidivism rates for these offenses. There is no other group on citizens who have done their time and still continue to be punished by these ridiculous bills. Do your due diligence, find the real facts.

Beth Bryant

self

Georgetown, TX

I am writing in opposition to HB2133 authored by Ellzey to be heard by the County Affairs Committee.

I have built a new life in Central Texas after the death of my husband and created a fresh start for myself, for my son when his sentence is completed in a home/place carefully chosen location. This bill will affect myself and the property personally when I have done nothing wrong. I have supported my son for the last 11 years because of a youthful mistake, how is this fair?

There are 97,668 individuals as of February 2021 on the Texas Registry. That means there are 97,668 individuals that can be affected in some way when a residency restriction is put into place. Not all legislation affects every registrant in the same way. But what affects all registered citizens, and their families is the fear of the laws that the state passes. Additionally, all laws put together affect all registered citizens.

Will this legislature keep passing laws based on fear rather than scientific research? Will this legislature keep singling out registered citizens and their families leaving them no place to live? The 82nd Texas Legislature (2011 – 10 years ago)

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

recommended that:

- To Amend the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure to prohibit local jurisdictions from establishing additional local residency restrictions for sex offenders. (Page 356)
- There is little evidence supporting the theory that residency restrictions improve public safety.
- Most registered citizens must live more than 500 feet away from where children gather. The Board of Pardons and Parole determines each registrant's residency restriction based on risk.

Consider this bill and all residency restrictions affecting 97,668 register citizens. Now consider the registered citizens and his family.

- $2 \times 97,668 = 195,336$
- $3 \times 97,668 = 293,004$
- $4 \times 97,668 = 390,672$
- $5 \times 97,668 = 488,340$

This bill plus other restrictions in effect have the possibility of destroying 500,000 plus Texan's livelihood and where they may live.

Ten years ago, the state studied and determined that residency restrictions do not improve public safety. Registrants are less likely to re-offend when connected to family and community, find jobs, and live with a support network. Therefore, displacing registrants could increase recidivism. But yet, the legislature continues each session to file bills such as HB2133.

Please DO NOT pass this bill out of committee.

Beth Bryant

Carrol Montgomery

self

Sachse, TX

Please do not allow this HB2133 legislation to pass out of your committee. This bill is not needed. It would put burdens on families and law enforcement officials. There is no research to support additional laws on sex offenders. If any of these individuals need supervisor support, it will be in place. Please consider the impact on families. Thanks you for opposing this bad proposal.

Erica Colunga

Self

San Antonio, TX

I am OPPOSED to HB 2133 by Ellzey for the upcoming County Affairs Committee.

This bill will make it much more difficult for registered individuals to find a suitable employment and or residency in the State of Texas. In this time of extreme unemployment and struggle one would think that a reasonable solution would be to keep all people employed and in their homes versus homeless, unemployed and unable to be located. Do you not see the endless circle these types of bills set up?

Already, there are many towns in which registered persons cannot live or work due to restrictions.

Additionally, designated Child Safety Areas such as Bus Stops and Child Care Centers change frequently. New Bus Stops appear and Child Care Centers are opened without notice. This would require new off limit areas to be constantly mapped by authorities. As you are required to notify the public of recovering offenders in these areas you old be required i also notify the offenders of new Child Safety Areas, as well.

If registrants cannot live within many towns and limits are placed on unincorporated areas, where do you expect registrants to

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

live? It is easy to forget that these restrictions impact negatively on the families. Under a bill like this, it is easy for families to become homeless.

I believe this is a bill in search of a problem which doesn't exist. This bill should not be approved.

Tim Sankey

Self

San Antonio, TX

I STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS BILL.

Giving counties the ability to create residency restrictions will not improve public safety. There is no evidence, data, or research that proves residency restrictions increase public safety. In fact, it does the opposite, it disenfranchises those on the registry and makes it harder for them to find fair and adequate housing. For example, I was convicted of an offense that landed me on the registry over 20 years ago. If this bill was enacted and counties could create residency restrictions, I would not have been able to live with my family (mother), who was my support - the one person who was able to help me get back on my feet. Fast forward twenty years, I have a good job, a wonderful wife, and I am a homeowner, all, in large part, due to the support that my mother was able to provide. Additionally, as my mother ages, I worry, what if these types of restrictions are put in place, would I even be able to go to the home of my mother and help her as she ages....and give back to her in her time of need just as she did with me? I hate to think of that possibility so let's not make it reality. Vote NO on HB 2133.

Geraldine Pisklak

Self. Retired

Kingwood, TX

I'm OPPOSED to this bill. I believe it to be just another useless bill that helps no one and hurts innocent families members. PLEASE HAVE THE GOOD CONSCIENCE TO VOTE NO ON HB 2133.

Robert Patton

Self, retired engineer

Georgetown, TX

I strongly OPPOSE this bill because IT WILL NOT improve public safety; it will only serve to further punish a single class of felons over all others. A person who was once convicted of a sexual offense and successfully served their time and is reintegrating into society should be afforded all the same rights and privileges as any other felon with regards to movement throughout the county. Decades of empirical data has proven that people listed on the public registry have very low rates of recidivism and are far less likely to recommit another sex offense than someone not on the registry. The same research will also demonstrate that the most likely perpetrator of a new sex offense will be someone the victim already knows by way of family, school, friends or some other trusted relationship already established...NOT a registered citizen. Think about it...shouldn't a law abiding parent be allowed to take their child to a park, the library, a bus stop, school, toy store, movie theater, arcade, playground or any other place where children gather regardless of whether they were previously convicted of drugs, extortion, DWI, robbery, burglary, assault and battery, child endangerment, child abandonment, animal abuse, murder or a sex offense? Which of these classes of felons is the worst?

So, before casting an affirmative vote for this bill (just to go along with popular sentiment against sex offenders) please conduct some individual research and learn the truth about the unintended negative consequences this bill would impose on tens of thousands of Texans and their families if it were to become law.

Please VOTE NO on HB2133 by Ellzey

Nigel Gale, Mr.

Self

Shavano Park, TX

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

OPPOSE: This bill will not improve the security of any Texas citizens and it will only make us less safe. Please consider the following:

- 1) Registered Citizens only have a recidivism rate of 3.5%, which is less than all other offenders except for homicide.
- 2) Most contact offenders are known to the victim and are unfortunately are often members of their immediate family. Child Safety Zones will do nothing to protect children under this situation.
- 3) There can be so many Child Safety Zones that it is almost impossible for registered citizens to leave their homes for work, school and normal activities so making it more difficult for them to re-assimilate into society
- 4) Child Safety Zones can appear unpredictably. For example, if a neighbor of a Registered Person opens a private day care in her home this will prevent or at least impede a registered persons egress.

Please do not support this damaging bill.

Terry Nelson

Self

Plano, TX

Please vote no on this bill. I am absolutely appalled at how many of these unenforceable bills are moving forward! Number one, children are not in danger from people they do not know. Almost 100% of the time children are approached and harmed by a coach, an uncle, a cousin, or other relative or known person. None of the sex offender restrictions address the major primary source of children being harmed. Bill's such as this one cost taxpayers huge amounts of money. These kinds of bills overload our much overloaded Police Department. Trying to enforce these Laws is like trying to catch Bigfoot. Law-enforcement will spend so much energy, time, and money to produce what? A registrant that happens to pass less than 500 feet from a Dairy Queen? I think these bills are strictly and entirely for the sole purpose of providing a politician the record to point at that somehow proves he is trying to protect the citizens children. This politician doesn't care about protecting anyone. This politician cares about a documented record of punishing and torturing registrants. Period. Please vote no not only on this bill but any and all bills that categorically and effectively do absolutely nothing except create paperwork and provide talking points for that politicians future. Please. Vote no on this bill and I'll like it.

Robert Huling

Self

Carrollton, TX

Good morning,

If I stood before you today, and attempted to ask you to believe, that by banning people of color from my neighborhood would make my neighborhood safer, you'd probably have me arrested. If I tried to convince you that restricting obese people from living near fast food restaurants, you could improve healthcare. If I tried to suggest that people with drunk driving convictions should be prohibited from entering any establishment that served or sells alcohol, you would think I was crazy.

However, if I came to you with study after study, from every level of private and government entities that supported these claims you just might take notice. But if I came empty handed and said "I believe" I'm right, you would not.

Representative Ellzey is doing just that.

There is zero data supporting the belief that residency restrictions increase safety. In fact there are numerous studies which state exactly the opposite. Restrictions serve no beneficial purpose. They are costly, they are driving families apart, they hurt innocent spouses, children. Force people into homelessness etc.

Additionally and as important, they add a false level of security.

It is well documented that cases of molestation by strangers are incredibly rare. Over 92% of child molestation is committed by a person who has access to and authority over a child. Not strangers. Instead, it's teachers, coaches, priests, clergy, uncles, brothers, neighbors, parents, siblings. Yet, we stress STRANGER DANGER..

If Representative Ellzey had ANYTHING to support the benefits of restrictions, I'd support it. But there is nothing that supports these baseless claims. Nothing.

Nothing.

God Bless you all. God bless ALL Americans.

Oppose this bill.

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

Thanks

Mitchell Kerley

Self

Fort Stockton, TX

Hello,

My name is Mitchell G. Kerley and I am one of over 100,000 people currently on the Texas Sex Offender Registry. I am writing to oppose the residency restriction bill and ask that you please acknowledge the data regarding the negative impacts these type of bills have on people and their families. These laws do nothing to enhance the safety of the community, and creates hardship for families on the registry. I have worked hard to become a productive Texas citizen and a role model for my children. These bills cause undue hardship, job loss, and the break up of families due to people on the registry not being able to live with their families. I have son that is severely disabled, and requires both my wife and I to care for him with access to services. Those services are not available in the rural areas, and not to mention if you pass this law those areas will be off limits to my family. I have worked hard all my life to provide and take care of my family, but with laws like these it places those of us on the registry in even more of difficult position to find work to support our selves.

I ask that before undertaking measures that once again can have such a significant impact on our families please research the issue and the data out there regarding residency restriction. At the bare minimum commission a study for these laws to determine if such actions provide actual service to community we all live in.

As a felon and person on the Sex Offender registry integrating ourselves back into our communities are difficult enough without restrictions that keep us from our families, friends and a support group. Again please vote no on this bill.

Carlos Robles

Preserving the Constitution

Austin, TX

Dear Committee Chair Coleman & Committee members,

I'm in opposition of HB 2133. I'm basing my opposition on analytical research which validates that bills of this nature violate the constitutional rights of Texans without the complete understanding by those who author bills such as HB 2133, and especially those who have good reason to back feel good laws by freshman legislatures. Is the chair and committee members aware that we live in a country where you are innocent until proven guilty? If the chair and members share in a different ideology where it's perfectly ok to violate the rights of Texans, we as a nation have violated our duty to protect both the Texas and U.S Constitution. The facts favor that restriction don't prevent these heinous crimes from occurring, regrettably 92% of victims know their offender. Data from the UCR draws this conclusion. Sadly those stranger on stranger offences have been committed by those who lack the ability of controlling their sexual urges and impulses. Is the Chair and Committee aware that a majority of those individuals who have committed these heinous crimes aren't even on the registry, and that the recidivism rate is low for those who have committed sexual assault. I'm sure Rep. Ellzey means well, but not with this bill. If Texas lawmakers want to increase public safety, they need to start by reducing the number of offender case loads for SOAR Units throughout the state with legitimate reason to public safety, and stop being complicit when violating the rights of fellow Texans.

Philip Taylor

self, LPC retired

DALLAS, TX

I oppose HB 2133 by Ellzey for multiple reasons as were laid out in the comments and testimony against HB1862, on 4/8/21. All of those remarks were logical and trenchant and there is no need to reprise them. I want to look in a different direction and ask how bills like HB2133 and HB1862, which are so wrong-headed and cynical, make it as far as committee? I can see no other explanation for their provenance than that they were framed by someone who knew nothing about the behavior they want to control or don't care about the facts. Either way, they model pure know-nothingism: "I don't know and I don't care so long as my

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

assertions further my political career.”

Bills such as HB2133 are legislative theater. They pander to the basest instincts of an electorate keen on adding punishment upon punishment to marginalized registrants. (I know, the courts have ruled that the registration/banishment regime falls under administrative, not criminal law, but that is a canard transparent to any sensate being.) Bills like HB2133 are clearly efforts of sponsors to wrap themselves in robes of righteousness and “courageously” stand against (particularly sexual) evil, not withstand the high likelihood that a cursory examination of their own courtship histories would disclose instances of immoral or illegal activity, they having two x chromosomes and all.

Bad facts make bad law and bad motives make worse law. I urge you to reject this oppressive bill.

Deborah Sharp

Self

Midland, TX

My son will be released soon and required to register. Our home has been approved for him to resume his life and try to become a productive citizen once again. That is his goal. We don't live in the district of this bill but this one or any like it, if passed, could eventually affect our County. All my son wants to do is prove to himself and the rest of society his God given worth. Not be hassled for the rest of his life. I don't believe this bill or any like it will help anyone. Please do more studies on this and vote NO on bill HB2133.

Thank you.

Brenda Slagle

Self - Clerical

Groves, TX

Dear Representatives,

I'm contacting you today in opposition of the above mention bill that will be presented to your committee soon.

I am the mother of a registered citizen of this state. Ever since being placed on the registry for a non contact offense (indecent exposure, child of 13) I have found it appalling the draconian measures for which his life,our lives as his parents trying to help him, and the lives of HIS children have been altered. Repeatedly I hear fear mongers press on about "protecting the children" Well, are any of you protecting my grandchildren from the constant shame and bullying they endure once a "well intentioned" neighbor notifies the rest of the neighborhood about the "boogey man" that lives on their street?

The people who have been given a scarlet letter (some for life) are tasked with being good members of our community and state. To hopefully find some type of employment(no one wants to hire the "boogey man", pay taxes, take care of their children (we all know the horrible statistics of fatherless homes). It gives me great comfort knowing that the ax murderer that has moved next door to me is totally safe by your standards.

I'm just one person, I can't change the world on my own necessarily; however I can hopefully appeal to your humanity. I understand your position with your voters. No one wants to be labeled "soft" especially on the one million unwanted registered citizens of our county. These are human beings, that for whatever their circumstance (mostly forms of mental illness or addition) was caught up with law enforcement. Why would you want to again narrow their ability to even exist by putting in safety zones in the county? The safety zones are absolutely ridiculous and do nothing to "improve" safety of children. Only talking to our children about respecting others and how to do that will indeed "keep our children safe"

Respectfully,

Brenda Slagle

James Brian Sliter

Self, unemployed

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

Lancaster, TX

Dear Representatives,

Please oppose HB2133 or at the bare minimum, save political face by voting to table the issue until a study can be completed or save political face by stating that a prior State of Texas Legislative Committee study completed about ten years ago recommended that restrictions for citizens required to register NOT be adopted.

Supporters of HB2133 have admirable intentions to prevent new sexual abuse but the bill actually increases the rate of recidivism. Federal, state and academia studies conclude policies such as HB2133 makes the community less safe by increasing recidivism rates due to the policies causing an unstable home environment and lack of support.

If the state adopts HB2133, the state will not only allow policies to be implemented that increase recidivism of sexual offenses, but needlessly sanction and force people into homelessness, tear apart families and harm children of registered citizens.

Federal, state and academia studies conclude that approximately 97% of new sexual offenses are committed by people not on a registry and conclude that approximately 90-95% of victims know their abuser and the abuser is someone close and trusted, not a stranger.

The supporters of HB2133 are ignoring the prevention of 97% of new sexual offenses and instead are pushing policies that have been determined to increase recidivism rates of the 3%. This makes no logical sense to me and I hope it makes no logical sense to you.

Letting feelings instead of facts dictate public policy in this case actually makes the community less safe. How you feel regarding the issue does not change the facts.

You were not elected to office to vote in policies to make the community less safe, and needlessly sanction and force people into homelessness, tear families apart, and ruin the lives of children of registrants. If you do vote to allow such policies and then lie to your constituents that you are protecting them, God help your soul when you meet your maker.

Respectfully,

James Brian Sliter

Cynthia Kelly

Self

Taylor, TX

I am OPPOSED to HB 2133 by Elizay for the upcoming County Affairs Committee. I have a family member who is required to register. When he completed his sentence and was scheduled to be released, it was very difficult to find a place where he could live. Now he is trapped because his commute to work is long and he can't find work close to home out where we live. If he had more options for where he could live, he'd be doing better financially and emotionally. This bill is a feel good bill. It may make some people think they are safer but when we isolate, stigmatize and continue to punish those who have served their sentences by making it very difficult for them to find decent housing, we are holding them down from being productive citizens. Please vote against this bill. Thank you.

Cathy Zuniga

Self

Frisco, TX

Registrants by and large are no danger to children. Recidivism is one of the lowest. If all other crimes were this low we could close all the prisons and with the billions we would save we could seriously educate the remaining offenders. Please do not make peoples lives more difficult just for the sake of trying to look good. ALL people have the right to work and stay in a decent

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

home. This bill will impact a lot of peoples existence negatively. Do not pass this bill. Please. There are more productive ways. You impact families with these horrible bills, and cause further harm. You don't do this to drug offenders who have a high recidivism rate or other criminals, they get a 2nd chance, so please remember and be part of the solution not the problem. Please oppose HB 2133.

Thank you
The Zuniga Family

Christy Muse
Self
Spicewood, TX

I strongly oppose HB 2133. There is no evidence, there are no statistics, there are no studies, there are no reports, supporting the theory that the imposition of residency restrictions or child safe zones improve public safety. This legislation will cause more harm than good. Thank you.

Martha Franks
self
Fort Stockton, TX

Along with not being able to find housing, there falls upon the families that the sex offender belongs to.....Not all of them should be charged with this offense or registering on an archaic system. Their children are being deprived of their constitutional rights. I oppose very strongly against this bill. Some of these SO, just want a second chance, why should they be punished for the rest of their lives?

Dennis Kelly
Self
HOUSTON, TX

I oppose this Bill because it is a bill to correct a problem that does not exist, and there is no evidence, no prior instances of problems with those convicted of sex-related offenses to who live close to a school committing a criminal act against a school student. No statistical evidence supports such legislation. Surely Legislatures should not legislate to correct a problem that does not exist. The supporter of this bill has, I understand, adduced no evidence to support it given the perceived purpose of the bill. This bill purports to restrict residency for an individual convicted of a sex-related offense but not does preclude someone convicted of kidnapping another, from living within the proposed exclusion zone. The legislature has so many legitimate concerns to address rather than nonsense such as HB 2133.

Bill Shier, Mr
Self, retired
Austin, TX

Representatives:
All the research shows that residency restrictions do nothing to protect citizens from sexual predators, so this legislation will only lead people to assume they are safe, when their risk remains the same. First, over 90% of victims know and are familiar with the person assaulting them. Second, over 95% of perpetrators are not on the registry. Residency restrictions make your constituents less safe by making it difficult for released offenders to integrate successfully by denying housing choices, limiting job opportunities and making it difficult to support their families. Instability leads to higher recidivism! Please do not support this “feel good” destined to fail legislation.
Thank you for the sacrifices you make to do this essential work!
Bill Shier

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

Bethany Goerdel, Mrs.

self, teacher

Justin, TX

Texas has almost 100,000 citizens on the sex offender registry and my daughter is one of them. Cities have already restrictions in place for child safety zones that restrict any registered person from living in the majority of the city limits. Search any city map and there are very few places to live. This makes it difficult to find housing at a reasonable distance to work and family. By allowing counties to also restrict registrants from portions of the county, how and where are these citizens going to find housing, support their families and get access to much needed support from family and the community? There has been documented proof that the vast majority of new sex offense cases (over 95% from many studies) do NOT involve someone already on the registry or a stranger. The enormous cost to Texans and the great state of Texas of maintaining the registry and continuing to add more and more restrictions is NOT the answer and does not keep children safe. My daughter also deserves a safe place to live and work. Please consider other options and DO NOT pass this bill. There are many organizations out there that was to work with lawmakers on reform, not new laws. All you have to do is work harder on reform. That's what we want all from our representatives, not more laws.

Briscoe Cook, Mr.

Self

Trinity, TX

I am against this bill. Most cities and towns have limited the places where registrants can live. Now you want to do the same thing in the county. If a registered person can't live freely in the cities and freely in the county, where do they live? This bill would require the police to constantly update bus stop and child care locations which change frequently. These restrictions also affect the families of registrants. There is no reason for this bill except for political gain. Don't trade a persons freedom... for votes.

David Chambers, Dr./Sgt

Self - Texas Peace Officer

Austin, TX

My name is David Chambers and I am writing in opposition to HB2133.

As a Texas Peace Officer, I am concerned about public safety, especially the safety of children. However, there is no empirical research supporting the idea that residency restrictions for people who must register on the sexual offense registry protects the public. Paige Reed (Journal of Law and Criminal Justice, December 2017) conducted a literature review of research on this topic. Reed provided multiple previous research projects that indicated residency restrictions have no effect on public safety. Additional research has shown that residency restrictions actually increase criminal activity of people on the registry due to lack of support and stable housing options, leading to theft offenses, homelessness, and registration violations.

On a personal note, I have friends and family members who must register. Residency restrictions push my loved ones away from family, friends, and other services that assist and support them. Many people on the registry made a mistake in their past and have spent every day since attempting to make amends for their actions and improve their lives. Forcing them away from their support makes the scarlet letter they must wear bigger and brighter, making it more difficult to prove to the community they are not the act they once did.

Residency restrictions do nothing to improve public safety and cost money to implement. Why should we spend money on something that, according to research, increases criminal activity, versus spending money and resources on services that can actually increase public safety. Please oppose HB2133.

David Chambers, PhD

Jackie Iversen

Printed on: April 21, 2021 6:15 PM

Self Office Manager

Crowley, TX

Dear County Affairs Members

I am stating my opposition to HB 2133. There is more research that shows these "feel good" bills do nothing but hurt citizens required to register such as my son. While a residency restriction may sound like a good idea, it does nothing but harm those required to register and their families. My son had a Romeo/Juliet case when he was 18 years old. Due to a DWI his probation was revoked and he served 12 years in prison for "sexual assault of a child". An 18 year old male and a 16 year old female doing what teenagers do. He is now 44 years old, is married and has a very good job. He is trying to get on with his life. How long does he and his family have to suffer for his mistake? Every session someone thinks this is a good idea, when it actually does nothing but hurt all of us involved in his life. He still has trouble finding places to live if he wants to move to better his career. He is only one story of the more than 100,000 registered persons. Please do some research and discover the truth. I am attaching some information from a group that has been a tremendous help to us over the years dealing with these issues that are constantly being forced on us. Yes, it affects us all, not just the registered person. Please, please read this information and reconsider your decision to file this bill. Thank you for your time and for serving our state.

Jackie Iversen

<http://texasvoices.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/RR-Brochure-Combo.pdf>