



Safe NOW Project

www.safeNOWproject.org

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Contact: Margaret Bullens
Office: (660) 339-7477
Cell: (817) 875-4826
Email: Margaret@safeNOWproject.org

SEX OFFENDER LEGISLATION DEVELOPED WITH ASSISTANCE OF MISSOURI'S SAFE NOW PROJECT IN IMPORTANT HOUSE VOTE TODAY

TRENTON, MO...The US House votes today on important legislation impacting the safety of American children, which the Missouri-based SAFE NOW PROJECT has worked to develop. The **Children's Safety Act of 2005** is designed to prevent sexual violence by improving (1) current practices in sex offender management and (2) community notification. Co-sponsored by Congressman Sam Graves (MO-06), highlights of this key legislation include:

- Creates a comprehensive, national system for sex offender registration involving all offenders in all states.
- Improves and expands the scope, verification and exchange of sex offender registrant data by law enforcement with increased penalties for offenders who fail to comply with the registration laws.
- Creates a 3-year pilot program in 10 states for electronic monitoring of sex offenders.
- Increases penalties for certain crimes against children.
- Increases protection of children in the foster care system.

Congressman Paul E. Gillmor (OH-05), a leading co-sponsor of the legislation, thanked the many organizations who have lent support and endorsement for the Children's Safety Act of 2005 and gave special attention to the Trenton-based **Safe NOW Project**, as well as the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. In his comments this week, Gillmor said, "With more than half a million sex offenders registered in the United States, notification programs are vital to the public good. A national sex offender database should be comprehensive and offer consistent data from every state in the union. When it comes to sexual predators in our communities, knowledge is power, and through education and information, the best offense can truly be a strong defense. If learning of a sex offender living in your area makes you the slightest bit more aware, then this database is well worth it."

According to Margaret Bullens, founder of **Safe NOW Project** and recognized author and expert on sex offender management, "Linking the national sex offender database to education and other public resources is a major step in the protection of children from sexual abuse. It is both responsible and necessary to link the national sex offender registration database to education and resources that assist the general public in understanding the intent, nature and limitations of the details of this information. To prevent sexual victimization, we must not only improve the effectiveness of sex offender management strategies—including risk assessment, treatment, supervision and monitoring—but we must develop and implement community action and education programs designed to reduce the vulnerability of victimization for all citizens. The **Safe NOW Project** will soon be launching the first of a series of targeted community action campaigns in jurisdictions of Missouri, California, Texas and Washington.

The **Safe NOW Project**, Inc. strives to prevent sexual violence through community action, education and public policy leadership for a safer, more productive world. With the support of Missourians, such as John Chapman of Trickle Construction and Chapman Management Group, the Safe NOW Project is working at the national, state and local levels to minimize the impact of sexual violence on children.