



Patrons for Peace Project, Inc.

A Community Non-Profit Corporation

February 16, 2024

RE: HB 854

Delegate Sandy Barlett,

I am writing to express my support for HB 854, Sex Offender Required Registration -Locations.

I am an RN who is the president of a small non-profit organization in Laurel called Patrons for Peace Project Inc. My organization helps homeless individuals. I have encountered a situation with one of my clients who is on the Sex Offender Registry. I am asking for your assistance in helping to increase locations where the offender can report as required. If the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services expanded where the offender could register it would help the public and the sex offender.

The man I help is a developmentally disabled sex offender who must report every three months in person to the Sex Offender Unit in Landover. He lives [REDACTED] where he had been homeless for years and unregistered. Presently he has a room he rents but this is always subject to change. Reporting to the Sex Offender Registry Unit would not be possible for him if it were not for my assistance in using my driver. There is very limited public transportation [REDACTED] to Landover. My client does not have the financial wherewithal to pay for Uber or Lyft transport. At this point, my driver's situation is changing and may not be available. If he were able to take a bus to get to the unit, it would take hours and many bus transfers along the way. Due to his developmental disability, this would not be possible for him to do. Consequently, he would simply NOT REGISTER. He had been an unregistered offender for many years until I started to help him and convinced him to register. He also lives on SSI and most of his meager check goes to his rent.

I asked the Sex Offender Unit if he could go to [REDACTED] police station to register and we could do a video chat on my phone with the presence of a police officer, and they said no. There is only one place in Prince George's County where sex offenders can register. This does not help with compliance, nor does it help with public safety. The public deserves to know a sex offender's whereabouts and a sex offender who is trying to do what is right by complying should have more options to report. There should be more places to register and police stations would be the likely location. Maybe there could be some kind of kiosk installed at police stations? Sex offenders experiencing homelessness must report, Tier 1 and 2 offenders every six months, Tier 3 offenders every report every three months.

I am very committed to changing this existing protocol and feel strongly that there is a better way so everyone will benefit. I have watched the many changes occur in health care and know that the State of Maryland can become more progressive in the registration and reporting process for sex offenders. I would be honored to be part of this change if I could assist in any way.

Thank you for your consideration. I await your reply.

Sincerely,

Ruth K. Walls, MS, MSN, RN

Patrons for Peace Project Inc.

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