



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Owen H. Johnson

Senator Johnson Supports Plan To Track NY's Missing Sex Offenders

OWEN H. JOHNSON March 7, 2007

State Senator Owen H. Johnson (4th Senate District, Babylon), Chairman of the Finance Committee, joined his Senate Majority colleagues this week in calling on Governor Eliot Spitzer to implement a three-point plan within the next sixty days that would help identify the whereabouts of the more than 1,000 convicted sex offenders who have failed to comply with address verification requirements.

"The thought of more than 1,000 dangerous predators out on the streets living undetected amongst us in our neighborhoods is disturbing and unsettling," said Senator Johnson. "We have an obligation to protect the public and I am hopeful that the Governor will implement our plan to ensure that these missing offenders are tracked down once and for all. It's vital to the public safety."

The plan advanced by Johnson and his colleagues can be implemented by the Executive without legislation. The plan would help law enforcement officials track down these missing sex offenders, while also heightening awareness among members of the media and the general public when a sex offender might be on the loose in their community.

In an effort to more effectively track these dangerous missing sex offenders, members of the Senate Majority have proposed a three-point plan that would:

1. Establish a new investigative unit specifically tasked with tracking these criminals;
2. launch a new Missing Sex Offender Website to keep the public informed about sex offenders whose whereabouts are unknown; and
3. create a new "Predator Alert" information sharing system to quickly inform law enforcement, the media, and the public when an offender goes missing.

Specifically, the plan would:

Establish A New NYSAFE Office: (The New York Sex Offender Apprehension and Felony Enforcement Office)

The proposal calls on the Governor to immediately establish a new investigative unit within the State Police – the NYSAFE Office – that would be focused solely on tracking the location of registered sex offenders; verifying residency compliance; and notifying the public when a sex offender's whereabouts can no longer be determined.

Create New Missing Sex Offender Website:

The NYSAFE Office would work with local law enforcement agencies to track down and verify the residency compliance of registered sex offenders. When an individual's whereabouts can no longer be determined, the NYSAFE Office will be required to immediately post Level 2 and Level 3 offender information on a new DCJS Missing Sex Offender Website until such time as the offender is located and complies with the law. This website would be similar to New York's "100 Most Wanted" website, which has proven to be a highly successful law enforcement tool that has helped identify and apprehend many of the worst fugitive felons in the State.

Create the PREDATOR Alert System

(PREDATOR - Protect, Deter, Alert, Track, and Report System)

The third element calls for the State Police to establish a new PREDATOR Alert System – patterned after the highly successful Amber Alert system . This system would immediately alert local law enforcement agencies and the media of missing registered Level 2 and Level 3 sex offenders. Currently, when a child goes missing an Amber Alert is immediately sent out around the State, and at times, around the country. However, when a level three sexual predator goes missing, law enforcement officials obtain a warrant for the offenders arrest but members of the public are often left in the dark and in danger.

"As one of the original sponsors of Megan's Law in the Senate, I am committed to ensuring that this law remains as effective as it can possibly be," said Senator Johnson. "By implementing our this three point plan and continuing to ensure that those required to register their whereabouts under Megan's Law do so, we will go a long way toward achieving this goal."