NEWS

From Supervisor Gary Ovitt Fourth District, San Bernardino County

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OVITT SPEARHEADS JESSICA'S LAW TASK FORCE

San Bernardino - Fourth District Supervisor Gary Ovitt announced the formation of a San Bernardino County Jessica's Law Task Force designed to develop and effectively implement a County ordinance to further restrict residency of sex offenders. The Jessica's Law Initiative would prohibit sex-offenders from living within 2,000 feet of places where children congregate or assemble. Specific locations identified include schools and parks. However locations such as children's recreation centers, daycare facilities & public libraries are at the discretion of local municipalities. The Task Force would ensure that local municipalities are given the help necessary to enforce this initiative and assist law enforcement and local elected officials in implementing these child safety provisions.

"In the past, such measures have been defeated in the legislature even though they are desperately needed and widely supported by California's families and law enforcement," said Supervisor Ovitt. "I anticipate that the voters of San Bernardino County will overwhelmingly support Jessica's Law and support the formation of this Task Force to proactively implement the steps necessary to ensure our children are safe."

"Formation of this Task Force will allow us to start discussing how we will be going about designating "predator-free" zones within our county. This step is especially important for our residents in unincorporated areas because many sex offenders choose to move to these areas or are placed in these areas by the State," said Board of Supervisors Chairman and Jessica's Law Co-Chair Bill Postmus.

California's Jessica's Law, as proposed, is the combination of SB 588 (G. Runner) and AB 231 (S. Runner). Both bills have been introduced in each house of the State Legislature concurrently. Jessica's Law would offer several new and strengthened provisions to state law including GPS tracking of sex offenders for life, new predator-free zones for schools and parks, and stiffened "sexually violent predator" provisions for violent first time offenders. Jessica's Law would also increase penalties for these offenses, increase parole terms, and add new punishable offenses for sex offenders.

"We cannot afford to wait any longer for the protections Jessica's Law will provide our families," stated Anthony Adams Regional Co-Chair for Jessica's Law. "I am proud to be a part

of this Task Force as we work to ensure that we are fully prepared to implement the law when voters approve it in November."

"It is not the intent of this legislation or our County Task Force to drive sex offenders to homelessness due to residency restrictions; but let me state this very clearly, it is our intent to protect the children of our society first and foremost, and to assure that a sex offender is not living directly across the street from places where children go to school and play," stated Ovitt.

Board Chairman Bill Postmus and Supervisor Ovitt along with Sheriff Gary Penrod, District Attorney Michael A. Ramos, State Sen. Bob Dutton, Assemblyman Bill Emmerson, Jessica's Law Regional Co-Chair Anthony Adams, and a representative of the County Counsel's Office will make up the task force to ensure the ordinance is ready for this upcoming school year.

For additional information regarding the Jessica's Law Initiative & Task Force please contact the Supervisor's District Office at 909-465-1895.