

# USA FAIR, Inc.

Families Advocating an Intelligent Registry

[www.usafair.org](http://www.usafair.org)

## We love sex offenders.

We denounce what they did and we sympathize with their victims – but we love them for who they are today... former offenders who paid their debt to society and are now focused on rebuilding their lives as good citizens and providers for their families.

They are our spouses, our siblings, our children and our parents.



At USA FAIR, we only ask that the laws that impact former offenders, and by extension their families, are based on research and facts. We are willing to endure the collateral damage inflicted upon families of registrants if the empirical data shows that a law truly works and protects the community.

What we are no longer willing to do is sit silently by and watch our loved-one on the registry and our families suffer as a result of emotionally driven laws that are political placebos that don't actually protect anyone from anybody – but damage our lives in the process.

We know that the foundational falsehood of many of these laws is the myth of high sex offender recidivism – even though study after study has shown conclusively that sex offenders actually have one of the lowest re-offense rates in the criminal justice system.

USA FAIR does not oppose the sex offender registry, but we are against what the registry has morphed into – an instrument of inflicting ever-expanding sanctions on law abiding former offenders who have many years, or even decades, of law abiding behavior in the community.

A “bigger” sex offender registry is not a “better” registry. We support an intelligent registry that targets the truly dangerous and allows the vast majority of law-abiding registrants and their families to successfully rebuild their lives.

## What is an “intelligent” sex offender registry?

- An intelligent registry recognizes that **sex offenders have one of the lowest recidivism rates of all offender groups in the criminal justice system** and that only certain sub-sets of offenders are likely to reoffend.
- An intelligent registry would stop the one-size-fits-all approach and **target police resources and taxpayer dollars on monitoring the truly dangerous.**
- An intelligent registry would **exempt so-called Romeo & Juliet offenders where an older teenager is involved in a consensual statutory offense with a younger teen.**
- An intelligent registry would recognize that a bigger registry is not a better registry –it just creates a bigger haystack for the truly dangerous needles to hide in – and would **reduce the number of misdemeanor offenses that trigger registration.**
- An intelligent registry would **classify risk levels based on a scientifically tested risk assessment of the individual offender** – not just on the offense.
- An intelligent registry would incentivize and **reward good behavior by allowing law-abiding former offenders a process to have their risk level reduced.** (Research shows that recidivism risk drops sharply with age and years of offense-free tenure in the community.)
- An intelligent registry would also **incentivize good behavior by allowing offenders a process for relief from registration requirements** – or at least removal from the public registry – following 10 years of law-abiding behavior.
- An intelligent registry would recognize the life destruction that can ensue from the public registry on the web – not just to the offender, but to their family as well, and would **limit public notification only to the truly dangerous**, specifically those highest risk registrants whose offense involved violence or threat of violence, abduction, a stranger victim, a pre-teen non-relational child victim (cases of incest have the lowest recidivism rate) or those with prior convictions.
- An intelligent registry would recognize that **listing place of employment on the public registry makes former offenders virtually unemployable and that job stability is a key factor in maintaining law-abiding behavior.**
- An intelligent registry would not trigger residency restrictions by recognizing that **an offender’s support system of family and friends and connections to the community are critical factors in rebuilding law-abiding lives.** (Research shows that residential proximity to places where children gather does not contribute to higher recidivism.)
- An intelligent registry would recognize that **first time offenders who are not listed on the registry commit 95% of all sex crimes.** Most victims know their abuser. One is far more likely to find the picture of an abuser in the family photo album than on the sex offender website. The registry is no substitute for broad public education on the facts of sexual abuse. The registry is after-the-fact. We must educate adults and children to prevent sexual crimes BEFORE they happen.