

EQUITY FOR HOMELESS REGISTRANTS

SB3490

SEN. COLLINS

PROBLEM

People experiencing homelessness are required to register 52 times per year, while people who are housed only register once annually. In experiencing homelessness, people are forced to go through additional challenges to comply with the law. Registering weekly poses several challenges for individuals experiencing homelessness including taking time off work and obtaining money for public transportation. Registrants share that despite getting to the police station as early as 4:00 am they are sometimes turned away because the station doesn't have enough officers to conduct the registration and they are told to return the next day. This is often another day off work and the possibility of termination. Failing to register weekly leads to a *failure to register* charge, which carries a jail sentence and fine.

Over an 18-month period beginning on January 1, 2018, police departments in Illinois charged 1,777 people with Failure to register under SORA.

SOLUTION

SB3490 would address 3 main problems for people experiencing homelessness, who are attempting to register under the Sex Offender Registration Act and the Murderer and the Violent Offender against Youth Registration Act.

- ▶ Frequency – individuals lacking a fixed address, will register every 90 days
- ▶ Location – municipalities with a population over two million inhabitants, must have at least 4 different office locations where individuals can register with fixed times for registration
- ▶ Fees – anyone lacking a fixed address, will have their annual registration fee waived

IMPACT

SB3490 will assist in:

- ▶ Alleviating long lines and wait times in larger municipalities.
- ▶ Decreasing the number of people charged with failure to register, in turn decreasing the cost to local municipalities and the Illinois Department of Corrections arresting and incarcerating people.
- ▶ Providing registrants experiencing homelessness the stability to work and maintain employment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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“Registration for someone experiencing homelessness is difficult. Having to go in once a week for this purpose is depressing. In order to comply individuals are forced to choose between bus fare to the Police Department or food, they are forced to sit idle for hours only to provide the same information provided the prior week (as the law requires Registrants to provide notification of changes in addresses). It also subjects individuals to discrimination based solely on their housing status, and results in unfair and unequal treatment.”