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For Immediate Release
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March 1, 2006
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Van Roy's Views Cracking down on sex offenders

MADISON – Technology is a double-edged sword. While the Internet has allowed us to learn, shop, and keep in contact with each other more easily, it has also created serious problems and even new risks to our personal safety. None of these risks is more disturbing than the use of the Internet to exploit children.

The number of children using the Internet has exploded in the last six years, and technology is making access to children and child pornography easier than ever before. Consider these alarming statistics gathered by the National Juvenile Online Victimization Study and the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force:

- 2/3 of offenders who commit any type of sex crime against minors possess child pornography
- 1 in 5 children, ages 10-17, receive sexual solicitations over the Internet
- 1 in 4 of children receiving sexual solicitations over the Internet experienced unwanted exposure to pornography

These crimes make me scared for our children. Something must be done to protect our kids, and cracking down on child pornography crimes is an excellent way to catch sex offenders. Why? **Because child pornography offenders average 30.5 victims each.**

Current law prohibits the sexual exploitation of a child, the possession, production or distribution of child pornography, and using a computer to facilitate child sex crimes. However, even when criminals are successfully prosecuted, judges often hand down little or no jail time to these monsters who destroy the lives of children.

Right now, sex offenders who use the Internet to victimize children get a slap on the wrist. I say those wrists should be cuffed, not slapped.

That is why I am proud to cosponsor Assembly Bill 942. This legislation strengthens sentences for these sex offenders. First, it prohibits judges from giving these offenders probation. Second, the bill requires a minimum prison term of at least three years for criminals who possess child

pornography and of at least five years for those who distribute child pornography or use computers to facilitate their crime. Sex offenders have one of the lowest rehabilitation rates of any criminal group, which is why incarceration is the best option for keeping our children safe.

When 20 percent of unsolicited email contains pornography and more than 4 billion unsolicited instant messages are sent annually, it is also important to protect our kids from being assaulted with sexual material online. That is why I'm co-sponsoring another bill to be introduced soon which creates a registry similar to the telemarketing do not call list. Individuals will be able to register email addresses and cell phone numbers of their children with the state. Companies that electronically advertise pornographic services or materials would be forbidden from sending emails, podcasts and text messages by phone or internet to any one registered on the list. Any violation would result in a fine of \$1,000 per message or \$3,000 per message if viewed by a minor. Schools can also register their domain names to prohibit unwanted contact.

I strongly support several other bills introduced this session to combat sex offenders in our neighborhoods, and I am pleased these two bills fight sex offenders who enter our homes through technology instead of through the front door. I hope they will bring us one step closer to letting our children play, surf, and live safely in their own homes.

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