



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
GARY HEBL
46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 4, 2005

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Rep. Gary Hebl/608-266-7678

INFORMATIONAL COLUMN

SAFE PROGRAM PROTECTS COMMUNITIES FROM SEX OFFENDERS

Because several constituents in my district have contacted me with their concerns about the whereabouts of non-registered sexual offenders, I thought it would be helpful to let citizens know about current efforts and resources. Gov. Jim Doyle launched his Sex Offender Apprehension and Felony Enforcement (SAFE) Initiative in an effort to protect Wisconsin communities from sex offenders. This comprehensive plan is focused on keeping track of sex offenders after they are released. I'm proud to support this program and every other measure that encourages protection and safety of all the children of the state of Wisconsin.

A team of local, state, and federal law enforcement officers will hold sex offenders accountable for their actions by apprehending and prosecuting those who fail to notify authorities of their location. Beginning in April 2005, Doyle began a crackdown on sex offenders who haven't complied with the sex offender registry required by law.

The SAFE teams of retired enforcement officers will help track down sex offenders not on the registry. Beginning December 1, exact addresses of sex offenders will be available at the widocoffenders.org web site. The Department of Corrections has also implemented a toll-free tip line 1-877-234-0085 and email address docsafetips@doc.state.wi.us for reporting the whereabouts of sex offenders.

Rather than waiting for an offender to repeat a crime before finding them, Wisconsin will utilize these efforts to locate them in a proactive manner. This includes tracking about 200 of the state's more violent offenders with GPS monitors. Under this intense form of supervision, predators will be aware their actions are tracked constantly.

To help offset the cost of these increased monitoring efforts, registered sex offenders are now required to pay a \$50 annual fee as a result of a budget initiative. Although these programs are costly due to the law enforcement needed, the comprehensive programs will prevent offenders from becoming anonymous in the state.

The SAFE Initiative will use cutting edge technology to best protect our families. We must remain diligent regarding this issue, but through increased enforcement and monitoring, we can all be safer.

###