



For Immediate Release

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O'Malley Offers Comprehensive Plan to Enhance Sexual Predator Tracking

ANNAPOLIS, MD (February 7, 2006) – Today, Martin O'Malley urged the General Assembly to pass a comprehensive package sponsored by the City of Baltimore to revamp the state's failed sexual predator tracking system. Testifying before the House Judiciary Committee, O'Malley expressed his support for passage of HB 181, with amendments, that would increase the ability of law enforcement to track and monitor sexual offenders.

“Like all of you, as the parents of four children, my wife Katie and I shudder when we see news reports of convicted child molesters being set free only to hurt children again. Our children cannot defend themselves. It's up to us to do it. We need a stronger, more urgent response.”

Several hundred of the 4,300 offenders on the State's Sex Offender Registry may not live at the address listed on the website, while only about 1,300 - or less than one-third - are being supervised by the State.

“It is unconscionable that the state has lost track of so many convicted sex offenders. It represents an egregious failure of leadership protect Maryland families. I am grateful that Governor Ehrlich has finally come around to our position that we need to electronically monitor child sexual offenders – not just the handful of sexually violent predators. We all need to come together, regardless of political party, to get tougher on sexual predators.”

Based on a comprehensive plan O'Malley laid out last August (<http://www.martinomalley.com/content/192/omalley-lays-out-plans-to-track-sex-offenders>), HB 181, with amendments, would:

- **Legislate lifetime supervision for child sex offenders**, sexually violent predators and sexually violent offenders who continue to pose a threat. The current honor system, by which we ask violent criminals to let their local sheriff's office know where they live, doesn't protect citizens. Experts estimate that nearly one-quarter

of the addresses on sex offender registries are inaccurate - because they are self-reported by criminals. The O'Malley plan would also provide for specially trained parole and probation officers supervising sex offenders, helping to keep our neighborhoods safe.

- **Make failure to register a felony.** The O'Malley plan would make failing to register as a sex offender or providing the wrong address a felony rather than a misdemeanor.
- **Implement GPS tracking for child sex offenders.** The O'Malley plan would provide law enforcement with a powerful tool in locating sexual predators. Baltimore uses Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to track city vehicles, and starting next month, the State of Florida will use GPS technology to track sex offenders.
- **Improve information available to parents** through increased public notice and a centralized database maintained by the Division of Parole and Probation. Under the O'Malley plan, parents would be able to type in their address, neighborhood or school and find out whether registered sex offenders live nearby.
- **Enhance information sharing amongst all levels of government.** The O'Malley plan would use available technology and data to help facilitate cooperation and information sharing amongst all levels of government.
- **Bring greater accountability to tracking sex offenders.** Modeled on the CitiStat assessment tool, the O'Malley plan would enhance accountability by requiring a quarterly data-driven analysis of State compliance with the law.

“We need to take every step, every precaution to make sure parents and law enforcement have the tools to protect our most vulnerable citizens, our children.

“We know that there’s a better way to protect families. Through enhancing penalties, giving law enforcement the tools they need and increasing accountability, we can provide parents the peace of mind that comes with knowing that their leadership is doing everything they can.”

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