

1 S.13

2 Introduced by Senators Sears and Flory

3 Referred to Committee on Judiciary

4 Date: January 14, 2015

5 Subject: Criminal procedures; sex offender registration

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes a number of
7 changes intended to improve the efficiency and consistency of the Vermont
8 Sex Offender Registry.

9 An act relating to the Vermont Sex Offender Registry

10 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

11 ~~Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. § 5401(10)(B)(viii) is amended to read:~~

12 (viii) sex trafficking of children or sex trafficking by force, fraud,
13 or coercion as defined in ~~13 V.S.A. § 2635a~~ 13 V.S.A. § 2652;

14 Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 5403 is amended to read:

15 § 5403. ~~REPORTING UPON CONVICTION TO DEPARTMENT OF~~
16 PUBLIC SAFETY

17 (a) Upon conviction and prior to sentencing, the ~~court~~ Court shall order the
18 sex offender to provide the ~~court~~ Court with the following information, which
19 the ~~court~~ Court shall forward to the ~~department~~ Department forthwith.

20 ~~(1) name;~~

- 1 ~~(2) date of birth;~~
- 2 ~~(3) general physical description;~~
- 3 ~~(4) current address;~~
- 4 ~~(5)(4) Social Security number;~~
- 5 ~~(6) fingerprints;~~
- 6 ~~(7) current photograph;~~
- 7 ~~(8)(5) current employment; and~~
- 8 ~~(9)(6) name and address of any postsecondary educational institution at~~
- 9 which the sex offender is enrolled as a student.

10 (b) Within 10 days after sentencing, the ~~court~~ Court shall forward to the

11 ~~department~~ Department:

12 (1) the sex offender's conviction record, including offense, date of

13 conviction, sentence and any conditions of release or probation;

14 (2) an order, on a form developed by the Court Administrator, to comply

15 with Sex Offender Registry requirements, which shall include:

16 (A) the offense of which the defendant was convicted that requires

17 the placement of his or her name on the Sex Offender Registry;

18 (B) any prior convictions that affect:

19 (i) the defendant's Sex Offender Registry Status;

20 (ii) the length of time that the defendant is required to register as a

21 sex offender; or

1 ~~(iii) whether information regarding the defendant is required to be~~
2 electronically posted on the Internet under section 5411a of this title;

3 (C) the length of time that the defendant is required to register as a
4 sex offender;

5 (D) whether the defendant is designated as a sexually violent predator
6 under section 5405 of this title;

7 (E) whether the defendant was immediately released or remanded to
8 the custody of the Department of Corrections; and

9 (F) whether information regarding the defendant is required to be
10 electronically posted on the Internet under section 5411a of this title.

11 (c) The Departments of Corrections and of Public Safety shall jointly
12 develop a process for the Department of Corrections to notify the Department
13 of Public Safety when an offender is required to be placed on the Sex Offender
14 Registry because of a conviction that occurred in another jurisdiction of the
15 United States, including a state, territory, commonwealth, the District of
16 Columbia, or military, federal, or tribal court. The report shall include the
17 offense of which the defendant was convicted that requires the placement of
18 his or her name on the Registry.

19 Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 5407 is amended to read:

20 § 5407. SEX OFFENDER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT

21 * * *

1 ~~(f) A person required to register as a sex offender under this subchapter~~
2 shall continue to comply with this section for the life of that person, except
3 during periods of incarceration, if that person:

4 * * *

5 (2) has been convicted of a sexual assault as defined in section 3252 of
6 this title or aggravated sexual assault as defined in section 3253 of this title, or
7 a comparable offense in another jurisdiction of the United States, including a
8 state, territory, commonwealth, the District of Columbia, or military, federal,
9 or tribal court; however, if a person convicted under section 3252 is not more
10 than six years older than the victim of the assault and if the victim is 14 years
11 of age or older, then the offender shall not be required to register for life if the
12 age of the victim was the basis for the conviction;

13 * * *

14 Sec. 4. 13 V.S.A. § 5416 is added to read:

15 § 5416. PERSONS SUBJECT TO ERRONEOUS SEX OFFENDER

16 REGISTRY REQUIREMENTS; PETITION TO CORRECT

17 (a) A person may petition the Court for an order declaring that the person
18 has been inadvertently subject to erroneous Sex Offender Registry
19 requirements and directing the Department of Public Safety to correct the
20 error. The petitioner shall provide notice of the petition to the State's Attorney
21 or the Attorney General, who shall be the respondent in the matter.

1 ~~(b) A petition filed under this section shall include:~~

2 ~~(1) the Court's order issued under subdivision 5403(b)(2) of this title to~~
3 ~~comply with Sex Offender Registry requirements, if available; and~~

4 ~~(2) the factual basis for the petitioner's allegation that he or she was~~
5 ~~subject to an erroneous sex offender registry requirement.~~

6 ~~(c) The Court shall grant a petition filed under this section if it finds that~~
7 ~~the petitioner has demonstrated by a preponderance of the evidence that he or~~
8 ~~she was by Court order subject to an erroneous sex offender registry~~
9 ~~requirement. As used in this subsection, "erroneous sex offender registry~~
10 ~~requirement" includes the person's name being erroneously placed on the Sex~~
11 ~~Offender Registry or the Internet Sex Offender Registry, or the person being~~
12 ~~erroneously subject to lifetime registration under subsection 5407(f) of this~~
13 ~~title.~~

14 ~~(d) If a petition filed under this section is granted, the Court shall enter an~~
15 ~~order declaring that the person had been inadvertently subject to erroneous Sex~~
16 ~~Offender Registry requirements. The Court shall provide the order to the~~
17 ~~Department of Public Safety and direct the Department to take any action~~
18 ~~necessary to correct the error, including, if appropriate, removing the person's~~
19 ~~name from the Sex Offender Registry and the Internet Sex Offender Registry.~~

20 ~~(e) If the Court denies a petition filed under this section, no further petition~~
21 ~~shall be filed by the person with respect to the alleged error.~~

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~~Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE~~

~~This act shall take effect on passage.~~

Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. § 5401(10)(B)(viii) is amended to read:

(viii) sex trafficking of children or sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion as defined in ~~13 V.S.A. § 2635a~~ 13 V.S.A. § 2652;

Sec. 2. 13 V.S.A. § 5403 is amended to read:

§ 5403. REPORTING UPON CONVICTION TO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

(a) Upon conviction and prior to sentencing, the ~~court~~ Court shall order the sex offender to provide the ~~court~~ Court with the following information, which the ~~court~~ Court shall forward to the ~~department~~ Department forthwith:

- (1) name;*
- (2) date of birth;*
- (3) ~~general physical description;~~*
- (4) current address;*
- (5)(4) Social Security number;*
- (6) ~~fingerprints;~~*
- (7) ~~current photograph;~~*
- (8)(5) current employment; and*

(9)(6) name and address of any postsecondary educational institution at which the sex offender is enrolled as a student.

(b) Within 10 days after sentencing, the ~~court~~ Court shall forward to the ~~department~~ Department:

- (1) the sex offender's conviction record, including offense, date of conviction, sentence and any conditions of release or probation;*
- (2) an order issued pursuant to section 5405a of this title, on a form developed by the Court Administrator, that the defendant comply with Sex Offender Registry requirements.*

(c) The Departments of Corrections and of Public Safety shall jointly develop a process for the Department of Corrections to notify the Department of Public Safety when an offender who is under Department of Corrections supervision is required to be placed on the Sex Offender Registry because of a conviction that occurred in another jurisdiction of the United States, including

a state, territory, commonwealth, the District of Columbia, or military, federal, or tribal court. The report shall include the offense of which the defendant was convicted that requires the placement of his or her name on the Registry.

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. § 5405a is added to read:

§ 5405a. COURT DETERMINATION OF SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY
REQUIREMENTS

(a)(1) The Court shall determine at sentencing whether Sex Offender Registry requirements apply to the defendant.

(2) If the State and the defendant do not agree as to the applicability of Sex Offender Registry requirements to the defendant, the State shall file a motion setting forth the Sex Offender Registry requirements applicable to the defendant within 10 days of the entry of a guilty plea. To the extent the defendant opposes the motion, the State and the defendant shall present evidence at the sentencing as to the applicability of Sex Offender Registry requirements to the defendant.

(b) The Court shall consider the following when determining under this section whether Sex Offender Registry requirements apply to the defendant:

(1) the report issued pursuant to subsection 5403(c) of this title;

(2) the presentence investigation report regarding the offense for which the defendant is being sentenced;

(3) the Court's own judgment of conviction and any evidence that was presented at trial; and

(4) any other evidence admitted at sentencing and deemed relevant by the Court to the defendant's registry status.

(c) The State shall bear the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence the applicability of Sex Offender Registry requirements to the defendant under this section.

(d) Within 10 days after the sentencing or the hearing held pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the Court shall issue an order determining whether Sex Offender Registry requirements apply to the defendant. The order shall include:

(1) the offense of which the defendant was convicted that requires the placement of his or her name on the Sex Offender Registry;

(2) any prior convictions that affect:

(A) the defendant's Sex Offender Registry Status;

(B) the length of time that the defendant is required to register as a sex offender; or

(C) whether information regarding the defendant is required to be electronically posted on the Internet under section 5411a of this title;

(3) the length of time that the defendant is required to register as a sex offender;

(4) whether the defendant is designated as a sexually violent predator under section 5405 of this title;

(5) whether the defendant was immediately released or remanded to the custody of the Department of Corrections; and

(6) whether information regarding the defendant is required to be electronically posted on the Internet under section 5411a of this title.

Sec. 4. 13 V.S.A. § 5407 is amended to read:

§ 5407. SEX OFFENDER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT

* * *

(f) A person required to register as a sex offender under this subchapter shall continue to comply with this section for the life of that person, except during periods of incarceration, if that person:

* * *

(2) has been convicted of a sexual assault as defined in section 3252 of this title or aggravated sexual assault as defined in section 3253 of this title, or a comparable offense in another jurisdiction of the United States, including a state, territory, commonwealth, the District of Columbia, or military, federal, or tribal court; however, if a person convicted under section 3252 is not more than six years older than the victim of the assault and if the victim is 14 years of age or older, then the offender shall not be required to register for life if the age of the victim was the basis for the conviction;

* * *

Sec. 5. 13 V.S.A. § 5416 is added to read:

§ 5416. PERSONS SUBJECT TO ERRONEOUS SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY REQUIREMENTS; PETITION TO CORRECT

(a) A person may petition the Court for an order declaring that the person has been inadvertently subject to erroneous Sex Offender Registry requirements and directing the Department of Public Safety to correct the error. The petitioner shall provide notice of the petition to the State's Attorney or the Attorney General, who shall be the respondent in the matter.

(b) A petition filed under this section shall include:

(1) the Court's order issued under subdivision 5403(b)(2) of this title to comply with Sex Offender Registry requirements, if available; and

(2) the factual basis for the petitioner's allegation that he or she was subject to an erroneous sex offender registry requirement.

(c) The Court shall grant a petition filed under this section if it finds that the petitioner has demonstrated by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she was by Court order subject to an erroneous sex offender registry requirement. As used in this subsection, "erroneous sex offender registry requirement" includes the person's name being erroneously placed on the Sex Offender Registry or the Internet Sex Offender Registry, or the person being erroneously subject to lifetime registration under subsection 5407(f) of this title.

(d) If a petition filed under this section is granted, the Court shall enter an order declaring that the person had been inadvertently subject to erroneous Sex Offender Registry requirements. The Court shall provide the order to the Department of Public Safety and direct the Department to take any action necessary to correct the error, including, if appropriate, removing the person's name from the Sex Offender Registry and the Internet Sex Offender Registry.

(e)(1) If the Court denies a petition filed under this section, no further petition shall be filed by the person with respect to the alleged error.

(2) This subsection shall not apply if the petition is based on:

(A) newly discovered evidence;

(B) an expungement order issued under chapter 230 of this title;

(C) a successful petition under chapter 182 of this title (innocence protection); or

(D) a successful petition for postconviction relief.

Sec. 6. 2009 Acts and Resolves No. 58, Sec. 28 is amended to read:

Sec. 28. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2009, except as follows:

~~(1) that Secs. 22 and 26 of this act shall take effect on July 2, 2009.~~

~~(2) Sec. 14 of this act shall take effect July 1, 2010, provided that Sec. 14 shall not take effect until the state auditor, in consultation with the department of public safety and the department of information and innovation technology, has provided a favorable performance audit regarding the Internet sex offender registry to the senate and house committees on judiciary, the~~

~~house committee on corrections and institutions, and the joint committee on corrections oversight.~~

Sec. 7. REPEAL

2009 Acts and Resolves No. 58, Sec. 14 (electronic posting of offender addresses on Sex Offender Registry) is repealed.

Sec. 8. 13 V.S.A. § 5411a is amended to read:

§ 5411a. ELECTRONIC POSTING OF THE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY

* * *

(b) The Department shall electronically post the following information on sex offenders designated in subsection (a) of this section:

- (1) the offender's name and any known aliases;*
- (2) the offender's date of birth;*
- (3) a general physical description of the offender;*
- (4) a digital photograph of the offender;*
- (5) the offender's town of residence;*

(6) the offender's address or, if the offender does not have a fixed address, other information about where the offender habitually lives, if:

(A) the Department determines that all the information to be electronically posted about the offender is correct; and

(B)(i) the offender has been designated as high-risk by the department of corrections pursuant to section 5411b of this title;

(ii) the offender has not complied with sex offender treatment;

(iii) there is an outstanding warrant for the offender's arrest;

(iv) the offender is subject to the registry for a conviction of a sex offense against a child under 13 years of age; or

(v) the offender's name has been electronically posted for an offense committed in another jurisdiction which required the person's address to be electronically posted in that jurisdiction;

~~*(6)(7) the date and nature of the offender's conviction;*~~

~~*(7)(8) if the offender is under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, the name and telephone number of the local department of corrections office in charge of monitoring the sex offender;*~~

~~(8)(9)~~ whether the offender complied with treatment recommended by the department of corrections;

~~(9)(10)~~ a statement that there is an outstanding warrant for the offender's arrest, if applicable; and

~~(10)(11)~~ the reason for which the offender information is accessible under this section.

* * *

~~(d) An offender's street address shall not be posted electronically. The identity of a victim of an offense that requires registration shall not be released.~~

* * *

Sec. 9. EFFECTIVE DATES

(a) This act shall take effect on July 1, 2015, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

(b)(1) Sec. 8 of this act shall take effect on the date the Department of Public Safety reports to the General Assembly that the Sex Offender Registry has:

(A) no critical errors; and

(B) an error rate of ten percent or less for errors that are not critical errors.

(2) As used in this subsection, "critical error" means one of the following errors:

(A) An offender's name should be on the Sex Offender Registry or the Internet Sex Offender Registry but it is not.

(B) An offender's name should not be on the Sex Offender Registry or the Internet Sex Offender Registry but it is.

(C) An offender's name is scheduled to be posted on the Sex Offender Registry or the Internet Sex Offender Registry for an incorrect length of time.