

House Republican Press Release

April 5, 2007
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Frey Supports House Republican Proposals for Child Safety



“From School Yard to Cyber Space”

HARTFORD – Rep. Frey along with the House Republican Caucus today offered legislative proposals to make Connecticut’s children safer, more secure in schools and provide greater protection from child predators roaming the streets and cyber space.

Rep. Frey, of Ridgefield said child safety enhancement is a central feature of the Republican caucus. “Our proposals for Internet safety training will equip teachers, parents, and children with the knowledge know-how to avoid the dangers of online predators and other pitfalls.”

Here are the key components:

- Make schools safer by strengthening security and imposing single entrances for all buildings;
- Double the penalties for crimes committed in designated Child Safety Zones;
- Require school contractors to submit lists of employees for review by local school boards. Currently only teachers and janitors are covered;
- Post the “docket” of people convicted for sexual offences and make it available via the Internet and require updated compliance with offenders’ addresses and photos;
- Expand the state’s Child Identity System, including giving parents more opportunities to provide local law enforcement agencies critical information about their children;
- Work with Internet providers and other private sector companies to make the web more secure for young people.

In 1998, legislation mandating that the Department of Public Safety establish and maintain a central registry of sex offenders was passed by the General Assembly. The legislation requires that registry information be made available to the public through the Internet and at each local police department or State Police troop. The Sex Offender Registry Unit of the Connecticut State Police maintains the registry from the Department of Public Safety Headquarters in Middletown Connecticut.

Since 1998 other states have adopted registries that go much further than Connecticut when it comes to having updated Internet information on convicted abusers. For example, the state of Minnesota's sex offender registry provides information such as photographs and easy-to-read information about predators for parents to read.

Rep. Frey said, "Parents entrust schools with the safety of their children; we must do all we can to give them the peace of mind they deserve. We need to reinforce the message to our children that crime is not normal, and creating *Child Safety Zones* around schools will help limit kids' exposure to ALL major crimes."

"We recognize parents can not follow their children around to protect them. These are common sense proposals to assist parents in keeping their children safe," added Rep. Frey.

According in the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, convicted rape and sexual assault offenders serving time in State prisons report that two-thirds of their victims were under the age of 18, and 58% of those--or nearly 4 in 10 imprisoned violent sex offenders--said their victims were aged 12 or younger. In 90% of the rapes of children less than 12 years old, the child knew the offender, according to police-recorded incident data.