



Greetings,

My name is Cindy Prizio. I am Executive Director of One Standard of Justice (OSJ), a non-profit civil rights organization established in 2015. OSJ is comprised of volunteers working on behalf of people accused or convicted of a sexual crime and their families.

Over the past 8 years, we may have spoken on the phone or met in person. OSJ will be holding more opportunities to meet both myself and our dedicated volunteers this year. We have three meetups scheduled for December. Over lite refreshments, we will help you become familiar with OSJ, the resources we provide, and how you can stay informed about or help with our vital work. All are invited and encouraged to attend\*, your loved ones and friends are also welcome (please, no one under 18).

*\*If you are under supervision, be aware that there may be people who have a felony conviction or who are also under supervision at the meetups. Please be sure to stay in compliance with your supervision conditions.*

**12/2 - 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM** - New Britain Public Library, 20 High St., **New Britain**, CT 06051

**12/2 - 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM** - Silas Bronson Library, 267 Grand St., **Waterbury**, CT 06702

**12/9 - 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM** - Community Health Center\*\*, 675 Main St., **Middletown**, CT 06457

*\*\*Please, no parking in Community Health Center lots.*

*Limited free parking at 34 Rapallo Ave. On-street parking is available (\$0.25/15 min)*

Along with this letter is a newsletter highlighting some of OSJ's important work and information that may benefit YOU *now*. The most important being that many of you may be eligible to apply for a pardon from the CT Board of Pardons and Paroles.

We have also included a sample of a feature article by Jaden Edison of the CT Mirror on OSJ's 2023 legislative campaign, Paid in Full. The article highlights our fight against the Registry as seen through the lens of people on the Registry and their family members. I, on behalf of OSJ, have begun a series of op-eds, also published by the CT Mirror. You can read both articles, *Time to Reform the Registry* and *Who has hijacked Halloween?* here: [CTMirror.org/author/cindy-prizio-opinion-contributor/](https://CTMirror.org/author/cindy-prizio-opinion-contributor/)

OSJ can accomplish so much more with you by our side. We must band together in knowledge, if not in person. Visit our website to contact us ([OneStandardOfJustice.org/contact-us/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/contact-us/)) and provide your email address so that we may more easily keep you apprised of our work. Sharing information with you by mail is costly, especially for an organization with a limited budget. If you are unable to use our website, we may also be contacted by phone at (203) 680-0567. Currently, a return call may take up to two weeks.

Sincerely,

Cindy Prizio

Human Advocate  
and Executive Director, *One Standard of Justice*



[OneStandardOfJustice.org/donate/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/donate/)

*Please note that One Standard of Justice (OSJ) is NOT a law firm, we are not attorneys, and we are neither authorized nor licensed to provide legal advice. Nothing contained in this correspondence is intended to constitute legal advice and any information or references found herein or on our website should not be used as a substitute for advice of competent counsel.*

## OSJ legislative action to remove people from the registry

In the 2023 legislative session, OSJ ran the **Paid in Full** legislative campaign to pass SB1194 – a bill to release people from the Registry who were retroactively placed on it in 1998. Our bill passed out of the Senate with broad support by leadership and members of both parties. Despite this bipartisan support, the bill stalled in the House after being tabled with a PT (pass temporary).

The Paid in Full campaign will be carried forward in the upcoming legislative session. OSJ will continue to fight to pass this legislation and provide relief to hundreds of people. You can learn more about our campaign on our website: [OneStandardOfJustice.org/paid-in-full/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/paid-in-full/)

## OSJ litigation to remove presence restrictions

OSJ along with John Doe filed a lawsuit to remove Bristol's "child safety" zone ordinance. Unconstitutional ordinances like these provide no child or public safety benefit, while causing great harm to the children of impacted parents. This is the second town after Windsor Locks that chose to revoke the ordinance rather than proceed to trial. As a direct result John Doe was able to attend his son's high school graduation. This was a huge personal victory for him and other impacted Bristol parents who have already been forced to miss so many of their children's milestones, such as first days of school, graduations, sporting events, and other activities. Windsor Locks was the first town to revoke its ordinance in 2019.

OSJ plans to file additional lawsuits to remove "child safety" zone ordinances. There are still nine towns in Connecticut with a "child safety" ordinance, and another town is trying to pass a new ordinance. OSJ will not rest until every CT citizen is free of such harmful and ineffective laws.

**If you are a citizen in Danbury, Ansonia, or Naugatuck who would like to participate in a John Doe complaint to remove the child safety zone ordinance in your town please reach out immediately:**

[OneStandardOfJustice.org/contact-us/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/contact-us/)

## OSJ resumes *Fearless* support group

In the first quarter 2024, OSJ will resume our emotional support group, *Fearless*, both virtually and in-person. This program is for those accused or convicted of sexual crimes and their families and friends. The well-being of everyone impacted by the Registry is essential. OSJ receives calls daily on the harm being done to this community through systemic issues such as prosecutorial misconduct, community supervision, treatment, housing and employment barriers. *Fearless* will begin in Jan/Feb virtually. Information and instructions on how to participate will be emailed and posted on our website: [OneStandardOfJustice.org/fearless/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/fearless/)

## Pardons are possible

The Board of Pardons and Paroles offers an absolute pardon, including expungement of all criminal records and removal from the registry for those who qualify. Applicants can apply starting five years after conviction date and must be off community supervision.

**If you are interested in learning more about potential pardons, please fill out our pardon interest form:**

[OneStandardOfJustice.org/pardon-interest/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/pardon-interest/)

## First Amendment win in CT

A federal district court in *Cornelio v. State of CT* found that the CT law requiring people mandated to register to report their email addresses and all other “internet identifiers” to the police violates the First Amendment. The decision applies only to Cornelio. OSJ is following up with a class-action case to provide relief from this requirement to all people on the Registry in CT. Read more about it and find the full decision here: [OneStandardOfJustice.org/cornelio-v-ct/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/cornelio-v-ct/)

## How can you make a difference?

### VOTING

ALL NON-INCARCERATED CITIZENS OF CT HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE, whether you are a person with a felony conviction, formerly incarcerated, currently on parole or probation. Voting is the most direct way to have your voice heard. If you are not yet engaged with local and state government elections, we ask you to get out and VOTE.

[Portal.CT.gov/-/media/sots/ElectionServices/Misc/TheUltimateFreedompdf.pdf](https://Portal.CT.gov/-/media/sots/ElectionServices/Misc/TheUltimateFreedompdf.pdf)

### DONATE and/or VOLUNTEER

If you like our work, please show us your support by making a donation so we can continue growing and providing more services. Or by joining us as a volunteer!



[OneStandardOfJustice.org/donate/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/donate/)



[OneStandardOfJustice.org/volunteer/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/volunteer/)

## New legislation allows fax or email of address verification letters

SB969, subsection (c), adds “facsimile or electronic mail” to the accepted methods for returning verification letters. The full text of the new legislation can be found on the CGA website:

[CGA.CT.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00193-R00SB-00969-PA.PDF](https://CGA.CT.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00193-R00SB-00969-PA.PDF)

Free and fast, fax or email produces a usually same-day update. As you may be aware, or experienced firsthand, verification letters are often late, not received from Middletown, and we find ourselves chasing letters sent through the mail, resulting in noncompliance or a violation, which may lead to an arrest.

OSJ has produced a guide on how to fax or email your verification to Middletown. It can be found here: [OneStandardOfJustice.org/fax-verification/](https://OneStandardOfJustice.org/fax-verification/)

Read the full article at: [CTMirror.org/2023/09/10/ct-sex-offender-registry-law-advocates/](https://CTMirror.org/2023/09/10/ct-sex-offender-registry-law-advocates/)

## **‘Just existing, not living’: CT residents retroactively added to sex offense registry seek reprieve**

*Twenty-five years after Connecticut required them to register as “sex offenders” ex post facto, they hope the legislature will soon take action*

by **Jaden Edison**

September 10, 2023 @ 5:00 am

During counseling programs he’s attended throughout adulthood, Aaron Kearney has been told not to let mistakes define him and not to let the past hijack his future. But for a quarter-century, the 52-year-old has worn a label making it burdensome to live up to those ideals: “registered sex offender.”

“The only thing I feel is that I’m just existing. I’m not living,” said Kearney, on a recent windy Thursday at Bridgeport’s St. Mary’s-by-the-Sea, sitting at a picnic bench with the Long Island Sound as his backdrop. “At the end of the day, you should have sentenced me to death.”

The Bridgeport native never imagined that his name would live on the state’s public sex offense registry for the world to see. The Connecticut Mirror could not locate records outlining specific details in his case, but available documents show he was charged in 1997 with third-degree sexual assault for what he describes as assaulting a sex worker. Promptly after, he pleaded guilty and served eight months in prison.

Months following his release, however, Kearney received notification that Connecticut had recently enacted legislation creating the public registry. The new policy, approved during the 1998 legislative session (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/ps98/Act/pa/1998PA-00111-R00SB-00065-PA.htm>), was retroactive, meaning people convicted of a “sexually violent offense” in the decade prior to the law’s passage would have to enroll.

Whether or not the person had served time, sexually reoffended or posed a serious risk was insignificant under the new law. That wasn’t the end of it for Kearney. The state first required people convicted of a violent sex offense to register for at least a decade, where a court would grant them relief if they could prove they weren’t likely to reoffend. But in 1999, the legislature amended the law (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/ps99/Act/pa/1999PA-00183-R00HB-06785-PA.htm>), extending the enrollment mandate to a lifetime.

Twenty-five years later, Kearney is among hundreds of Connecticut residents still affected by the law’s retroactive provision. Faced with decades of adversity emanating from their status on the registry, many of them are pleading with legislators to fix what they feel was a far-reaching violation of their right to due process and an indifference to their humanity.

The registry “didn’t exist. I did not plead to it. I did not say I accept or reject,” Kearney said. “I didn’t even have the chance. And in this country, that’s not the law.”

Public sex offense registries (<https://www.apmreports.org/story/2016/10/04/sex-offender-registries-wetterling-abduction>), which reveal information ranging from one’s apartment floor to the bodily location of their tattoos, materialized in response to a number of highly publicized child abductions in



the 1980s and 1990s — notably Adam Walsh, 6, in Florida, Megan Kanka, 7, in New Jersey, and Jacob Wetterling, 11, in Minnesota. Though states had already established (<https://ctmirror.org/2018/05/21/sex-offender-registry-harm-good/>) sex offense registries, only law enforcement agencies had access to them.

Now most people convicted of sex offenses, from public indecency to first-degree sexual assault, are subject to public registration requirements with few exceptions. In Connecticut, the mandate lasts for either 10 years or a lifetime, depending on whether the charge was nonviolent or violent. Having one's name on the registry has made it all but impossible to maintain jobs, housing and relationships, experts say.

Furthermore, research shows (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/lsi.12189>) that policies passed in response to sex crimes have disproportionately affected Black men like Kearney, who in Connecticut comprise more than a quarter of people on the registry, according to a CT Mirror analysis.

Trevor Hoppe, a sociology professor at the University of North Carolina Greensboro who studies the intersection of race and the registry, doesn't think it's a coincidence given all that the country has invested into protecting white children.

"Under that veil, I think lawmakers have been able to pass all sorts of deeply punitive policies that impact way more than just people who commit crimes against children," Hoppe said.

When Connecticut's law was enacted, it was "designed to protect its communities from sex offenders and to help apprehend repeat sex offenders," former U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist once wrote (<https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/538/1/>) in a case reviewing whether the Constitution afforded people a right to a hearing prior to their placement on the registry.

During this year's legislative session, both Democrats and Republicans voted against legislation that would have removed people retroactively added. Their objections rested on the belief illustrated by Rehnquist and others — that the database works as an effective tool for maintaining public safety because it helps hold dangerous people accountable.

"If you commit that crime, that is your scarlet letter. People should know that, so they can make a well-informed decision on whether or not they want to leave their children around you," said Rep. Tammy Nuccio, R-Tolland, in an interview with the CT Mirror. "The fact that people want to take that tool away from me is pretty damn ridiculous."

But academics who conduct extensive research on sexual violence and public registries across the country offer a more nuanced perspective, noting the difference between community perceptions of safety and reality.

If a person has lived 15 years without reoffending sexually, the odds of them reoffending are no greater than those formerly incarcerated for non-sex crimes, said Elizabeth Jeglic, a licensed clinical psychologist and a professor at John Jay's College of Criminal Justice in New York.

"What we know is that the registry currently does not work," Jeglic said, adding that most crimes against children are perpetrated by someone they know...

**Article continues at: [CTMirror.org/2023/09/10/ct-sex-offender-registry-law-advocates/](https://CTMirror.org/2023/09/10/ct-sex-offender-registry-law-advocates/)**