

Office of the Governor
NEWS RELEASE

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**DiFRANCESCO SIGNS LEGISLATION GIVING PUBLIC ACCESS TO NJ'S
SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY**
New Law Extends Scope of "Megan's Law"

Acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco signed legislation today that establishes a sex offender Internet registry, which will enable the public to have access to information about convicted sex offenders.

"This bill will make New Jersey a safer place for all families. Anyone with access to the Internet will now be able to check the website, which contains information on all high-risk sex offenders and most moderate-risk offenders," said the acting Governor.

The website, developed and maintained by the State Police, will contain information on individuals determined to be Tier 3 or high-risk for repeating their crime and most Tier 2 or those at moderate-risk for repetition. The sex offender Internet registry will exclude low-risk offenders and those who pose a moderate risk who are first-time juvenile offenders. This provision was adopted because of the potential adverse consequences for their rehabilitation.

"The list of exceptions points to the care and thought that went into this legislation. I am confident that it will be a model for balancing the right to know against the danger of inadvertently creating more victims," said DiFrancesco.

The bill, A-4, appropriates \$500,000 to the Department of Law and Public Safety for the implementation of the Internet registry. This legislation also officially changes the registration and community notification laws to "Megan's Law."

"Sometimes, there are bills that you wish you didn't have to sign because they touch on issues you wish you didn't even have to consider -- problems that you wish you never had to encounter. I recognize that no matter how innovative or comprehensive we are in crafting legislation like this, we can't legislate safety. We acknowledge that parents and families and concerned citizens will and must always be the first line of protection for our children," said the acting Governor.

"Megan's Law," enacted in October 1994, establishes a state sex offender registry and a community notification procedure to help protect communities by providing information about convicted sex offenders to law enforcement agencies and the appropriate community members.

Acting Governor DiFrancesco signed A-4 at Megan's Place in Hamilton Township, a park dedicated in memory of Megan Kanka. The Rotary-Club of Hamilton-Washington raised money to purchase the house where Megan Kanka was murdered and replaced it with a public park.

Megan's parents, Richard and Maureen Kanka, run the Megan Nicole Kanka Foundation and joined DiFrancesco and bill sponsors, Senators Peter Inverso (R-Mercer/Middlesex) and Joe Vitale (D-Middlesex) and Assemblymen Joel Weingarten (R-Essex/Union) and Jim Holzapfel (R-Monmouth/Ocean), at today's bill signing.