

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

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Chairwoman Grad and members of the Committee, thank you for having us here today to discuss our sex offender registry audit.

As I understand it, the Committee's current focus is on S.13, which makes changes to the sex offender registry statute and provides a path to posting applicable offenders' addresses on the Internet Registry. With your permission, I thought I would focus my remarks on the elements in our report that may help with your deliberations—namely, the types of errors that we found and the cause of those errors.

The types of errors that we found are summarized in two tables in our report. The first table can be found on page 2—the highlights page.

This table shows that the most common category of critical errors was those related to the length of registration and there were also quite a few Internet posting errors. In total, 11 percent of the registry's records as of December 31, 2013 had critical errors.

The second table is located on page 11 of the report. This table summarizes the results of our statistical sample, which looked for errors by data element.

I draw your attention to the error rates for the following data elements because they affect whether an offender is posted to the Internet, for how long, and if they meet the criteria for having their addresses posted: victim age (47 percent), registration end date (40 percent), lifetime registration (9 percent), risk classification (9 percent) and sex offender treatment (5 percent).

Next, I would like to cover the three primary on-going underlying causes of the errors.

1. Manual process—Although VCIC had implemented a new system, information was still entered manually and the registry coordinator manually made determinations related to length of registration and whether the record would be posted on the Internet.
2. Lack of detailed and complete procedures—For example, the procedures did not address how to apply the sex offender statute to out-of-state offenders or how to determine an offender’s registration period.
3. DOC sending incorrect or late information to VCIC—About 28 percent of the applicable records in our sample had incorrect data because incorrect or untimely data was sent to VCIC.

I would also add that VCIC and DOC did not fully implement most of the recommendations from our 2010 report—which included areas that are directly related to the causes of errors in our most recent audit.

Pages 29 and 30 of the report contain our current recommendations to VCIC, DOC, and the Courts. They include fully implementing prior recommendations and identifying and tracking noncompliant high-risk offenders.

Lastly, at the time of our audit, VCIC had not established a process for determining which offenders would be required to have their addresses posted to the Internet Registry and the system would have to be modified to implement the criteria in the statute. As a result, we recommended that the Legislature require that, before addresses are posted, the Commissioner of Public Safety certify that the process that is established to support this function will ensure that addresses of only those offenders that meet the statutory requirements will be posted.

This concludes my statement and I would be happy to try and answer any questions that you may have.