

S T A T E   O F   N E W   Y O R K

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2011-2012 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

January 14, 2011

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Introduced by Sen. GIANARIS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Crime Victims, Crime and Correction

AN ACT to amend the correction law, in relation to requiring sex offenders to register for life and eliminating the petition for relief

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. Section 168-h of the correction law, as amended by chapter  
2     11 of the laws of 2002, subdivisions 1 and 2 as amended by chapter 1 of  
3     the laws of 2006, is amended to read as follows:  
4     S 168-h. Duration of registration and verification. 1. The duration of  
5     registration and verification for a sex offender [who has not been  
6     designated a sexual predator, or a sexually violent offender, or a pred-  
7     icate sex offender, and who is classified as a level one risk, or who  
8     has not yet received a risk level classification,] shall be annually for  
9     [a period of twenty years from the initial date of registration] LIFE.  
10    2. [The duration of registration and verification for a sex offender  
11    who, on or after March eleventh, two thousand two, is designated a sexu-  
12    al predator, or a sexually violent offender, or a predicate sex offen-  
13    der, or who is classified as a level two or level three risk, shall be  
14    annually for life. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a sex offender who is  
15    classified as a level two risk and who is not designated a sexual preda-  
16    tor, a sexually violent offender or a predicate sex offender, may be  
17    relieved of the duty to register and verify as provided by subdivision  
18    one of section one hundred sixty-eight-o of this article.  
19    3.] Any sex offender having been designated a level three risk or a  
20    sexual predator shall also personally verify his or her address every  
21    ninety calendar days with the local law enforcement agency having juris-  
22    diction where the offender resides.  
23    S 2. Section 168-o of the correction law, as amended by chapter 453 of  
24    the laws of 1999, subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 1 of the laws of

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 2006, subdivisions 2 and 3 as amended by chapter 11 of the laws of 2002,  
2 is amended to read as follows:

3 S 168-o. Petition for relief or modification. 1. [Any sex offender who  
4 is classified as a level two risk, and who has not been designated a  
5 sexual predator, or a sexually violent offender, or a predicate sex  
6 offender, who is required to register or verify pursuant to this article  
7 and who has been registered for a minimum period of thirty years may be  
8 relieved of any further duty to register upon the granting of a petition  
9 for relief by the sentencing court or by the court which made the deter-  
10 mination regarding duration of registration and level of notification.  
11 The sex offender shall bear the burden of proving by clear and convinc-  
12 ing evidence that his or her risk of repeat offense and threat to public  
13 safety is such that registration or verification is no longer necessary.  
14 Such petition, if granted, shall not relieve the petitioner of the duty  
15 to register pursuant to this article upon conviction of any offense  
16 requiring registration in the future. Such a petition shall not be  
17 considered more than once every two years. In the event that the sex  
18 offender's petition for relief is granted, the district attorney may  
19 appeal as of right from the order pursuant to the provisions of articles  
20 fifty-five, fifty-six and fifty-seven of the civil practice law and  
21 rules. Where counsel has been assigned to represent the sex offender  
22 upon the ground that the sex offender is financially unable to retain  
23 counsel, that assignment shall be continued throughout the pendency of  
24 the appeal, and the person may appeal as a poor person pursuant to arti-  
25 cle eighteen-B of the county law.

26 2.] Any sex offender required to register or verify pursuant to this  
27 article may petition the sentencing court or the court which made the  
28 determination regarding the level of notification for an order modifying  
29 the level of notification. The petition shall set forth the level of  
30 notification sought, together with the reasons for seeking such determi-  
31 nation. The sex offender shall bear the burden of proving the facts  
32 supporting the requested modification by clear and convincing evidence.  
33 Such a petition shall not be considered more than annually. In the event  
34 that the sex offender's petition to modify the level of notification is  
35 granted, the district attorney may appeal as of right from the order  
36 pursuant to the provisions of articles fifty-five, fifty-six and fifty-  
37 seven of the civil practice law and rules. Where counsel has been  
38 assigned to represent the sex offender upon the ground that the sex  
39 offender is financially unable to retain counsel, that assignment shall  
40 be continued throughout the pendency of the appeal, and the person may  
41 appeal as a poor person pursuant to article eighteen-B of the county  
42 law.

43 [3.] 2. The district attorney may file a petition to modify the level  
44 of notification for a sex offender with the sentencing court or with the  
45 court which made the determination regarding the level of notification  
46 OR WITH ANY COURT IN WHICH THE SEX OFFENDER HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A NEW  
47 CRIME, where the sex offender (a) has been convicted of a new crime, or  
48 there has been a determination after a proceeding pursuant to section  
49 410.70 of the criminal procedure law or section two hundred fifty-nine-i  
50 of the executive law that the sex offender has violated one or more  
51 conditions imposed as part of a sentence of a conditional discharge,  
52 probation, parole or post-release supervision for a designated crime,  
53 and (b) the conduct underlying the new crime or the violation is of a  
54 nature that indicates an increased risk of a repeat sex offense. The  
55 petition shall set forth the level of notification sought, together with  
56 the reasons for seeking such determination. The district attorney shall

1 bear the burden of proving the facts supporting the requested modifica-  
2 tion, by clear and convincing evidence. In the event that the district  
3 attorney's petition is granted, the sex offender may appeal as of right  
4 from the order, pursuant to the provisions of articles fifty-five,  
5 fifty-six and fifty-seven of the civil practice law and rules. Where  
6 counsel has been assigned to represent the offender upon the ground that  
7 he or she is financially unable to retain counsel, that assignment shall  
8 be continued throughout the pendency of the appeal, and the person may  
9 proceed as a poor person, pursuant to article eighteen-B of the county  
10 law.

11 [4.] 3. Upon receipt of a petition submitted pursuant to subdivision  
12 one[,] OR two [or three] of this section, the court shall forward a copy  
13 of the petition to the board and request an updated recommendation  
14 pertaining to the sex offender and shall provide a copy of the petition  
15 to the other party. The court shall also advise the sex offender that  
16 he or she has the right to be represented by counsel at the hearing and  
17 counsel will be appointed if he or she is financially unable to retain  
18 counsel. A returnable form shall be enclosed in the court's notice to  
19 the sex offender on which the sex offender may apply for assignment of  
20 counsel. If the sex offender applies for assignment of counsel and the  
21 court finds that the offender is financially unable to retain counsel,  
22 the court shall assign counsel to represent the offender, pursuant to  
23 article eighteen-B of the county law. Where the petition was filed by a  
24 district attorney, at least thirty days prior to making an updated  
25 recommendation the board shall notify the sex offender and his or her  
26 counsel that the offender's case is under review and he or she is  
27 permitted to submit to the board any information relevant to the review.  
28 The board's updated recommendation on the sex offender shall be confi-  
29 dential and shall not be available for public inspection. After receiv-  
30 ing an updated recommendation from the board concerning a sex offender,  
31 the court shall, at least thirty days prior to ruling upon the petition,  
32 provide a copy of the updated recommendation to the sex offender, the  
33 sex offender's counsel and the district attorney and notify them, in  
34 writing, of the date set by the court for a hearing on the petition.  
35 After reviewing the recommendation received from the board and any rele-  
36 vant materials and evidence submitted by the sex offender and the  
37 district attorney, the court may grant or deny the petition. The court  
38 may also consult with the victim prior to making a determination on the  
39 petition. The court shall render an order setting forth its determi-  
40 nation, and the findings of fact and conclusions of law on which the  
41 determination is based. If the petition is granted, it shall be the  
42 obligation of the court to submit a copy of its order to the division.  
43 Upon application of either party, the court shall seal any portion of  
44 the court file or record which contains material that is confidential  
45 under any state or federal statute.

46 S 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to all sex  
47 offenders registered or required to register immediately prior to the  
48 effective date of this act, or who are required to register on or after  
49 such date.