



# Sexual Violent Offender Laws: Are They Making A Difference?

**Barbara H. Johnson, PhD, MSN, RN and Kina Johnson, DrPH Student, MHSA, FACHE**  
**Jackson State University – School of Health Sciences**  
**Department of Health Policy & Management**  
**350 W. Woodrow Wilson Drive, Suite 2301-A**  
**Jackson, MS 39213**  
**[barbara.johnson@jsums.edu](mailto:barbara.johnson@jsums.edu)**



## Session Objectives

- Participants will have an understanding of the current sexual violent offender laws across states.
- Participants will discuss the efficacy of sexual offender laws in the deterrence of recidivism.
- Participants will address implications for health policy advocacy and research.




# Clarification of Terminology

- Sexual Violent Offense
- Predator
- Sexually Violent Predator



# Sexual Violent Offender Legislation

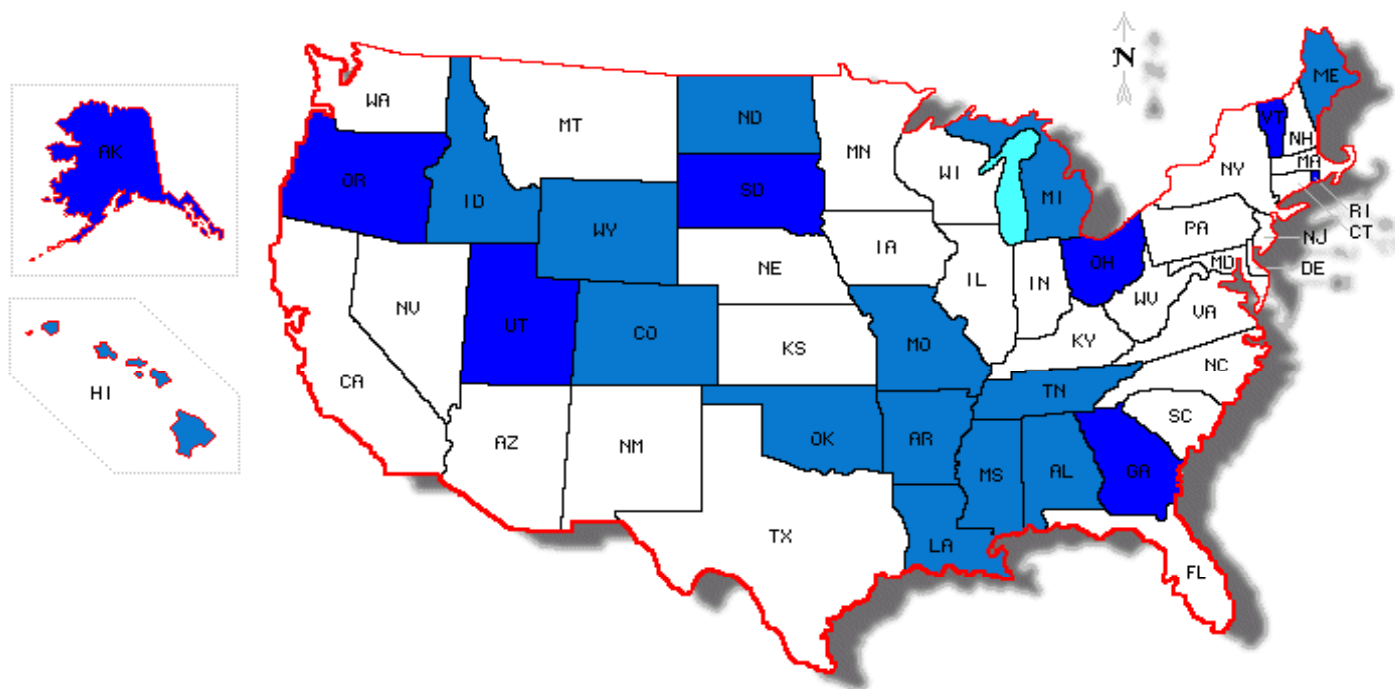
- Wetterling Crimes Against Children Act (1994)
  - Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act [Megan's Law] – 1996
  - Pam Lyncher Sexual Offender Tracking and Identification Act (1996)

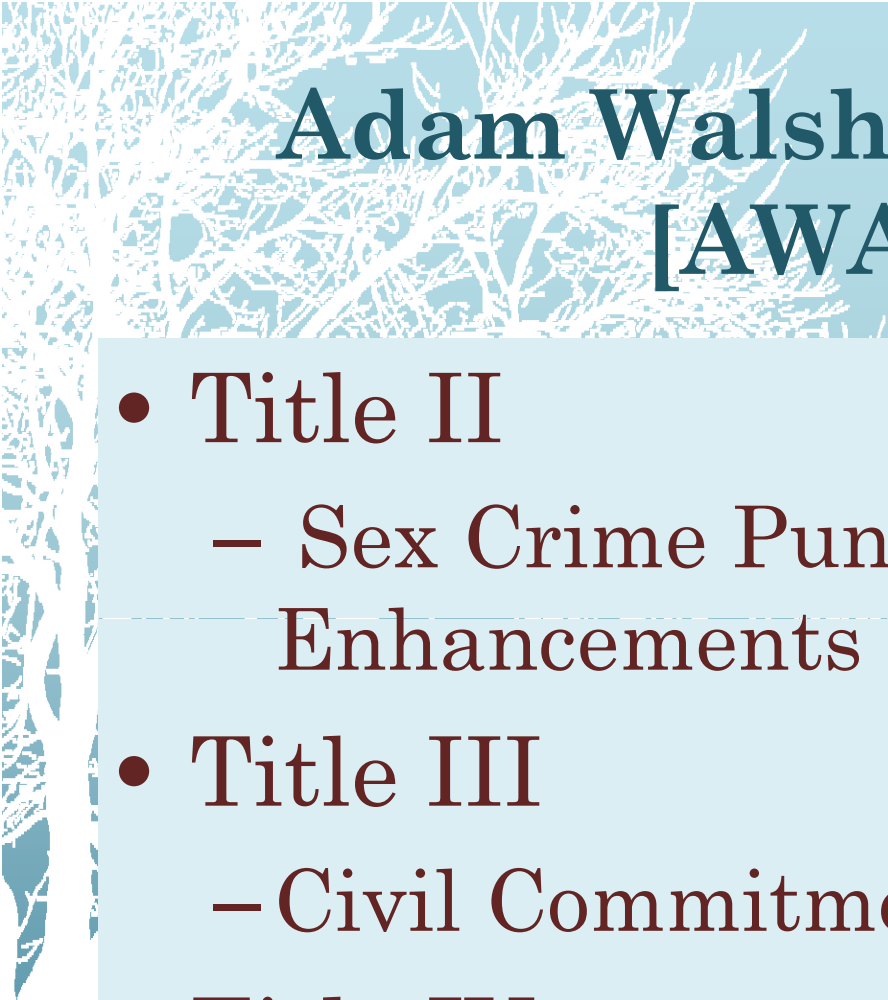


# Adam Walsh Protection Act [AWA] (2007)

- Title I (SORNA)
  - Registration and community notification
  - Greater offender accountability
  - Increased sanctions for noncompliance
  - Failure to implement → loss of JAG funds

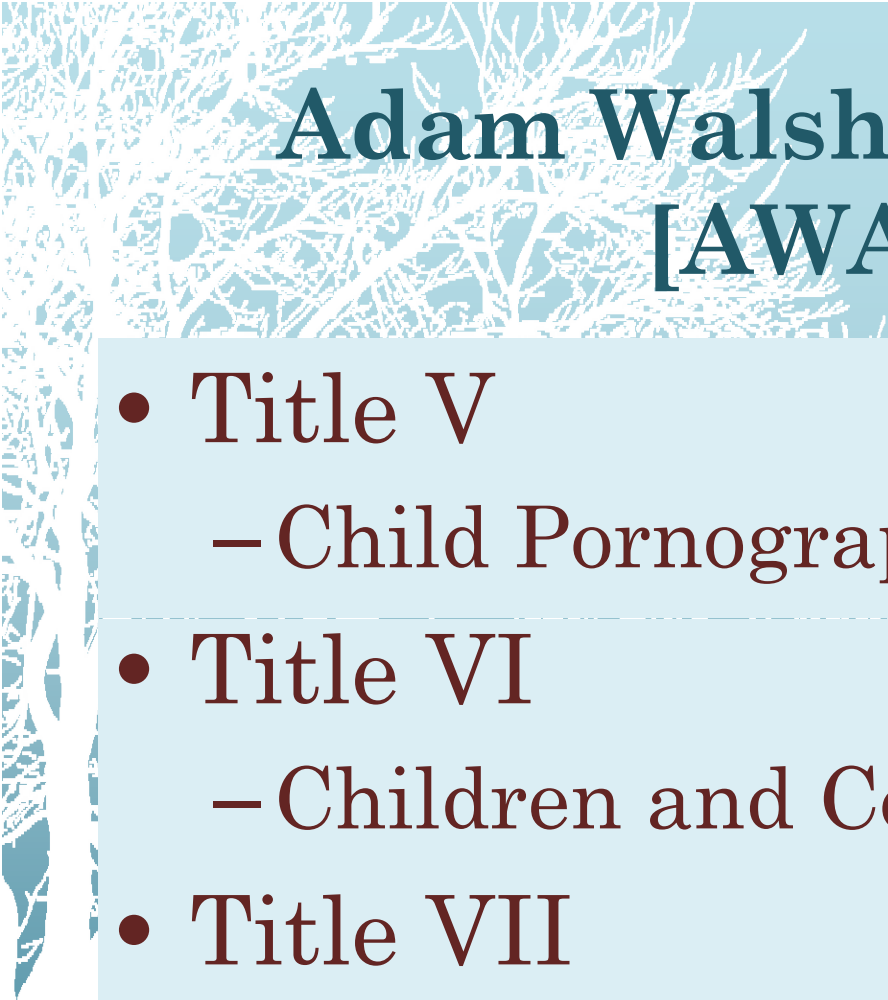
# SORNA Compliance





# Adam Walsh Protection Act [AWA] (2007)

- Title II
  - Sex Crime Punishment/ Sentencing Enhancements
- Title III
  - Civil Commitment
- Title IV
  - Immigration law reform

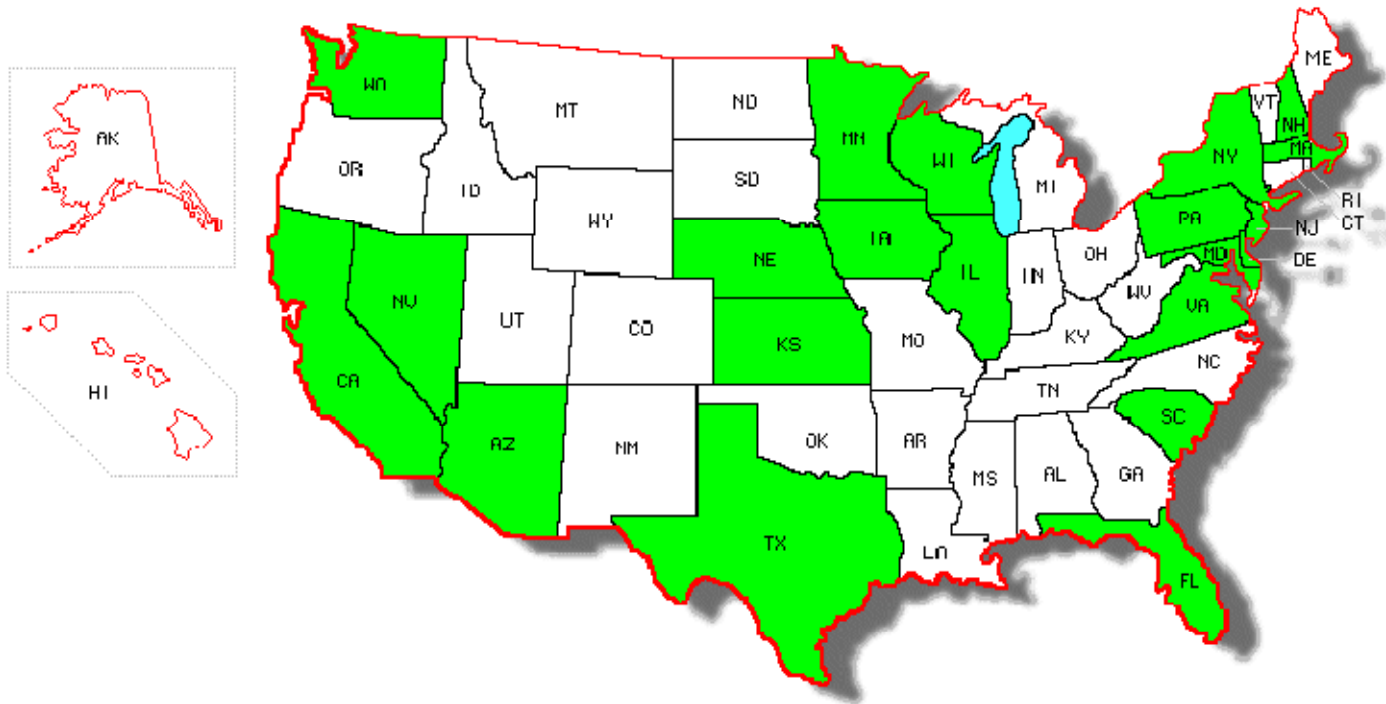


# Adam Walsh Protection Act [AWA] (2007)

- Title V
  - Child Pornography Prevention
- Title VI
  - Children and Community Safety
- Title VII
  - Internet Safety

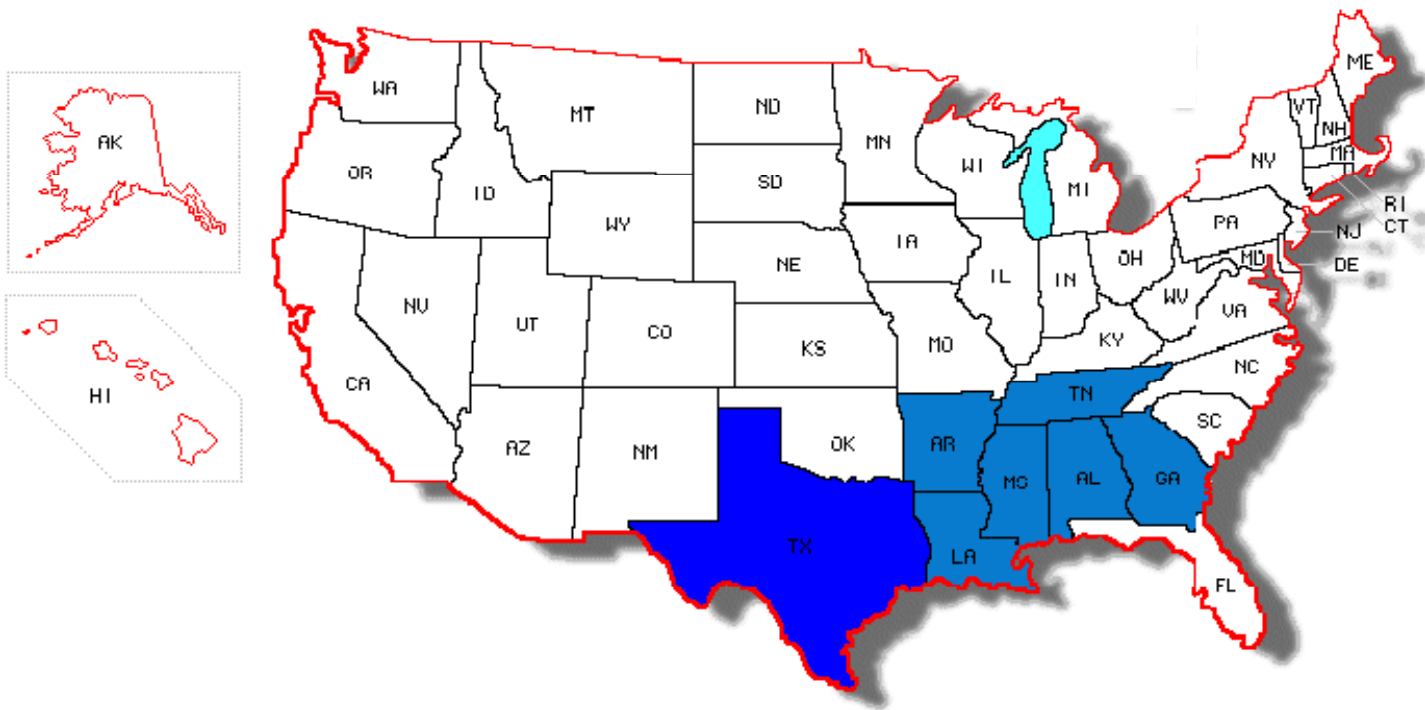


# States With SVP Laws



# “Bible Belt States”

Southern Bible Belt States





# Implementation Authority

- Varies among states
- Department of Public Safety
- Department of Justice
- State Law Enforcement Officials
- Local Law Enforcement Officials



# Impact on Recidivism

- Risk Assessment
- Registration Requirements
- Duration of Registration
- Compliance Rates



# Gaps/Deficits

- Public misperception
- Inconsistent risk assessments
- Reliable evidence-based statistics
- Reporting of compliance measures
- Others



# Challenges/Controversies

- Public safety
- Accuracy
- Removal from registry
- Community notification
- Public Access to database



# Policy and Advocacy

- In-depth Analysis of Existing Legislation
- Public Awareness
- Human Rights Protection
- Funding Priorities and Accountability



# Research Implications

- Sex Offender Treatment Programs
- Effectiveness of different strategies
- Funding of the Center for Sex Offender Management
- Community engagement and multidisciplinary collaboration





# Selected References

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- Velázquez, T. (2008). *The Pursuit of Safety: Sex Offender Policy in the United States*. New York: Vera Institute of Justice.
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[http://www.sexoffender.com/recidivism\\_sexoffenders.html](http://www.sexoffender.com/recidivism_sexoffenders.html).
- Wakefield, H. (2006). The Vilification of Sex Offenders: Do Laws Targeting Sex Offenders Increase Recidivism and Sexual Violence? *Journal of Sexual Offender Civil Commitment: Science and the Law, 1, 141-149*.