SENATE JUDICIARY
EXHIBIT NO. 3
DATE 3/19/09
BILL NO. HB 407

Dallas D. Erickson Testimony

HB 407 — Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Senate Judiciary Committee

Rep. Margaret MacDonald, Sponsor

March 18, 2009

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am Dallas Erickson and I represent Montana Citizens for Decency through Law.

Our organization drew the "Sexual Abuse of Children " law up and helped to see it pass in 1993 and strengthened in 1995. It is a good law outlawing the abuse of children through child pornography and other sexual exploitation.

The changes that Representative MacDonald makes in this bill will make it sufficient to address a depraved problem that has become all too common since the bill was passed. That is the men and women who travel and entice our children to molest them.

We read of cases all the time, in Montana and the nation, where molesters attempt to entice a child by electronic communications to engage in sexual conduct with them and then travel to meet and molest them.

It is sad to say that this change in the law is absolutely necessary in helping to keep our communities safer and to protect children especially from Internet predators.

Since child pornography is a crime scene photograph this bill also requires law enforcement to turn the videos or photographs in such material over to experts to try to find the child that was molested in order to get the child help and identify more predators.

We would ask you to pass this bill to strengthen the existing law and to give law enforcement more tools to arrest those who would harm our children for their sexual gratification.

Thank you.

Dallas D. Erickson

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