



For Immediate Release
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Representative Straus Announces that the House of Representatives Passes Legislation to Toughen Regulations Relative to the Commitment of Sexual Offenders

State House, Boston- Representative Bill Straus (D-Mattapoisett) announced that the House of Representatives passed legislation which creates tougher restrictions relative to the commitment of sexually dangerous persons in a 144-9 vote. This legislation will ensure that the most violent offenders will be caught and increases the number of crimes that can be used for civil commitment. In addition, this bill permits the district attorney or attorney general to seek the civil commitment of an inmate who has been previously convicted of a sexual offense but is presently incarcerated for a non-sexual offense.

The bill filed by Senator Robert Creedon (D-Brockton), was sparked by the gruesome murder of 30-yearold Alexandra Zapp of Rhode Island during the summer of 2002 at a Route 24 rest stop in Fall River. Under current law, judges can civilly commit repeat sex offenders after they complete their sentences if they are still deemed to be dangerous and were convicted of certain crimes. Senate 1005 expands the list of crimes covered under the commitment statute to include child pornography, kidnapping, accosting and annoying the opposite sex, lewd behavior, indecent exposure and other non-sexual crimes.

Representative Straus commented, “this legislation will help ensure the public safety of all citizens and keep our streets safe from sexual predators.”