

Media Advisory

For Immediate Release
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State may soon require convicted sex offenders to provide email addresses, screen names to TBI

(January 16, 2008) – RM Technologies, a Knoxville-based information technology solutions provider, announced today that a bill, which would crack down on convicted sex offenders and better protect children online, has been filed in the Tennessee General Assembly after months of lobbying from the local technology company.

RM Technologies began working with State Sen. Jamie Woodson's office to introduce legislation to the Tennessee General Assembly that would require convicted sex offenders in Tennessee to provide all electronic communications information to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI).

SB2594 and HB2585 would require that convicted sex offenders provide email addresses, chat names, instant message screen names or any other online electronic communications information to the TBI as part of their routine and annual information collection requirements.

"This bill presents an outstanding opportunity for us to strengthen Tennessee's child protection laws," said Senator Woodson. "I look forward to sponsoring this bill and working to keep our children safe from these predators."

Paul Sponcia, chief executive officer of RM Technologies, said the bill's introduction is "an important step in the right direction."

"As we continue to move into the digital age, it is more important than ever that we as a state make a promise to ensure that the Internet is a safe place for our children to take part in," he said. "It is our responsibility to allow our children access to the great technological advances being made through the World Wide Web, but only if we're taking the necessary measures to ensure their safety. This bill is an important step in the right direction."

The bill comes on the heels of a national effort to crack down on illegal use of online technologies by convicted sex offenders. On Monday, January 14, MySpace, a social networking site, announced a national partnership of 49 states to implement greater security measures for sites available to teens online.

Recently, a Tennessee convicted sex offender's vehicle was stopped during a routine search in Davidson County and was found with five male children, ranging in age from 12-13 years-old and told police that he met one of the boys on MySpace.

Sponcia said the hope is that SB2594 and HB2585 will deter convicted sex offenders from using communication technologies to contact children via the Web.

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"This bill serves as not only a deterrent to committing this method of contact with minors, but would also provide stiff penalties and/or incarceration for the falsification or omission in providing this information to the TBI," he said.

"We are hopeful that legislators across the state will see the benefit of enacting this legislation into law," Sponcia said. "Even if this legislation stops one crime from being committed, we've done our job."

RM Technologies Group is the premier provider of information technology solutions throughout the East Tennessee region. RM Technologies can be found on the Web at www.rmtgroup.com and at www.techtuesdayblog.com.

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