

California bill targets internet predators

by UPI

SACRAMENTO - California may join Kentucky and Virginia in passing a law that gives the identities of registered sex offenders to social Internet groups such as MySpace.

The proposed legislation is California's attempt to monitor sex offenders who troll chat rooms looking for young victims.

The plan would require registered sex offenders to report their e-mail addresses and Internet identities to the state which, in turn, would give them to MySpace and other social networks to block participation, the Sacramento Bee reported Monday.

The legislation is similar to proposed federal legislation and to new laws in Kentucky and Virginia.

Supporters call the legislation timely because online chat rooms and social internet groups are wildly popular. MySpace has about 100 million visitors per month, the Bee said.

Critics argue the legislation would infringe upon the free-speech rights of convicts who have not acted suspiciously and that predators easily could change their e-mail or instant message addresses.

California bill targets internet predators by UPI