

Gary L. Coning
Chief Assistant Prosecutor

Michelle J. Ambrozaitis
Clare County Prosecuting Attorney
225 W. Main Street, PO Box 586
Harrison, Michigan 48625

Traci M. Akins
Assistant Prosecutor

To: Chairman Heise and Criminal Justice Committee Members
From: Michelle J. Ambrozaitis, Clare County Prosecuting Attorney
Date: February 12, 2013
Re: House Bill No. 4127

I want to thank you for the opportunity to weigh-in on a very important piece of legislation, House Bill 4127. Representative Johnson has introduced House Bill 4127, which would give a judge or magistrate the discretion to require a defendant, who is on bail awaiting trial for an assaultive crime, to wear a GPS tracking device. This will ensure the protection of victims of crime and their families, which is my ultimate goal as prosecutor.

Without this legislation, an innocent person could be victimized again by that same perpetrator if the perpetrator is not accounted for while awaiting trial. Assaultive crimes include criminal sexual conduct, attempted murder, assault with intent to do great bodily harm, manslaughter, and even attempted murder, just to name a few.

As you may know, the impetus for Representative Johnson's introduction of this bill arose from a case out of my county. A young woman was a victim of a Criminal Sexual Conduct case where the defendant was able to bond out of jail pending the resolution of the case. He reported to the Court he would be residing with family downstate. There was no provision available for GPS monitoring. The night before the preliminary examination the victim was abducted from her father's home. After a lengthy search the next day, the defendant and the victim were found dead in his vehicle in a downstate cemetery. He murdered her then committed suicide. GPS monitoring, such as outlined in this bill, might have allowed law enforcement to locate him much faster and her death might have been avoided.

I recognize that the GPS monitoring system may not have prevented what happened to that young woman, and it may not prevent it from happening to another victim in the future, but it will provide us with another capability to ensure that we in the justice system do everything possible to keep crime victims safe while their case is pending ultimate resolution.

As the prosecuting attorney in Clare County, I believe this legislation will provide an important tool that will help keep our crime victims safe. I wholeheartedly support House Bill 4127 and I urge you to support it as well.

Thank you for taking your time this morning to read my statement.


Michelle J. Ambrozaitis
Clare County Prosecutor

Phone: (989) 539-9831

www.clarecountyprosecutor.com

Fax: (989)539-1807