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News Release

Civil Rights Groups to Protest DC's Discriminatory Curfew Independent Study Shows Curfews Do Not Reduce Juvenile Crime

Washington, D.C. – August 3, 2006: On Friday, Aug. 4, civil rights groups will protest Washington, D.C.'s restrictive curfew provision which makes it illegal for teenagers aged 16 and under to be outside after 10 p.m. Protesters will assemble at the Reeves Center at 14th and U, NW. Protests are legal and constitutional, and they will get the message across to the mayor if enough people participate. Participating groups will include the District Anti-War Network (DAWN) and the National Youth Rights Association (NYRA).

NYRA and many other organizations in the district area are opposed to juvenile curfew laws. "As long as any segment of our population is under house arrest for crimes that they did not commit, this is not a free nation," said Alex Koroknay-Palicz, NYRA's Executive Director. "This curfew mocks the American legal principle of innocent until proven guilty by treating young people as criminals just for being who they are."

Furthermore, independent research has found no evidence to support the claim that curfews reduce any type of juvenile crime. In their 1999 study for "Western Criminology Review," professors Mike A. Males of University of California Santa Cruz and Dan Macallair of San Francisco State University examined juvenile curfew laws across California. They reported, "[The] analysis of curfew laws point to the ineffectiveness of these measures in reducing youth crime."

Many police officers across the country feel curfew laws create a drain on police time and resources, forcing them to not only serve and protect, but also to parent.

Nighttime is not the most common time for juvenile crime. According to the FBI, youth between the ages of 12 and 17 are most at risk of committing violent acts and being victims between 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

The parents of teenaged violators of this curfew may be issued a fine of up to \$500 or community service, and teenagers may be ordered to work up to 25 hours of community service. Parents who do not pick up their teenagers from the two curfew centers in the district by 6 a.m. will have their teenagers taken to the Child and Family Services Agency.

About NYRA:

Founded in 1998, NYRA is the largest youth rights organization in the country. Based in the Washington, D.C. area, the organization is committed to fighting for increased rights of young people. NYRA has over 6,500 members nationwide, and it has appeared on ABC News, Fox News, CNN, and on numerous radio shows.

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