

Statement of

The Honorable Chuck Grassley

United States Senator
Iowa
March 2, 2011

Statement of Ranking Member Chuck Grassley
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
"Helping Law Enforcement Find Missing Children"
Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Madam Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing on efforts to help law enforcement find missing children. Like you, I have been a supporter over the years of many efforts to apprehend those who abduct children, exploit children, or otherwise harm children. Because many of these crimes involve transport over state lines or use of the internet, there is a strong need for federal involvement.

In 2006, I was able to include in the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act a version of child protection legislation I previously introduced. The provisions were named after Jetseta Gage, a brave 10-year old girl who was abducted, sexually assaulted and murdered by a repeat sex offender. Jetseta's Bill created mandatory minimum sentences for criminals who commit murder, kidnapping, or serious bodily harm against children. Today's hearing will help bring into perspective the children, many like Jetseta, who were abducted, assaulted and murdered. Our children deserve to grow up in communities free from child predators.

One of the important points of today's hearing is to raise public awareness of the realities of missing children. Although parents rightfully fear that a stranger will abduct their child, that is not the common situation. Most abducted children were taken by people they know, often a parent. And, much more than is commonly realized, these abductions involve force or violence.

Of course, much of the work in this area is done by state and local law enforcement. The federal government should assist the efforts of state and local government, and I know that at least one of the witnesses today has an idea to help improve the situation when parents claim conflicting custody orders.

One idea that will come up today is the use of IRS data to possibly locate missing children. The Finance Committee will ultimately resolve that question. It is often said that if something can be done that might possibly rescue one missing child, that it ought to be done.

I certainly want to provide all sensible help to law enforcement to find missing children. But even well-meaning proposals can implicate other important values that need to be considered. We will do our best, and I am pleased that we do have a witness today who will bring insight to the reasons for confidentiality of tax returns and the practical realities that might be affected by a

change in tax confidentiality rules. And Madame Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to place in the record a letter from the Joint Committee on Taxation on this subject.

I look forward to today's testimony.

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