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EDITORS’ NOTES
This issue of *FSR* considers recent legal developments relating to the sentencing and management of sex offenders. Headlining recent congressional efforts, the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 substantially expanded the role of the federal government. Most notably, the Walsh Act adopted new nationally uniform standards for state sex offender registries. With states expected to implement the new federal standards in 2009, and with a growing body of cases addressing constitutional challenges to various aspects of the Walsh Act, it seems a good time to assess the likely impact of the new law. Several of our authors take up the challenge. In general, they conclude that the Walsh Act represents an unwarranted and constitutionally dubious expansion of the federal role—one that will impose significant new administrative burdens at all levels of government and possibly even prove counterproductive as a recidivism reduction measure.

In addition to Congress, many state legislatures have also been active in adopting new sex offender laws. Their efforts range from enacting new civil commitment statutes to adopting the death penalty for rape of a child to prohibiting sex offenders from having any “Halloween-related” contact with children. Our authors consider several of the state-level initiatives, including the Supreme Court’s controversial 2008 pushback in *Kennedy v. Louisiana*, in which the Court effectively overturned laws in six states that authorized capital punishment for rape of a child.

Notwithstanding the modest constitutional constraints imposed by *Kennedy*, the legislative appetite remains strong for new measures to monitor and control sex offenders ever more rigorously. It is to be hoped that continued, critical analysis of recent enactments will help to channel these political energies in more fruitful directions.

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