



## Blagojevich signs domestic violence monitoring law

Tuesday, August 5, 2008 2:57 PM CDT

**By Deanna Bellandi**  
**Associated Press**

CHICAGO -- A newly-signed law named for a suburban woman gunned down by an ex-boyfriend outside her office will allow Illinois judges to order domestic violence offenders to wear tracking devices.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed the legislation Monday that lets judges order abusers to wear global positioning devices to track their movements so victims can know if they get too close.

The law is named for Cindy Bischof, who was slain in a parking lot in March by an ex-boyfriend who then turned the gun on himself. Bischof's family said she'd inquired about using GPS technology before she was killed after taking numerous steps to try to protect herself.

"My sister Cindy's death shall not be in vain and her legacy will live on forever to help others," Michael Bischof said at the bill-signing ceremony. Bischof has worked since his sister's death pushing lawmakers for stronger laws to protect domestic violence victims.

Under the law, which goes into effect Jan. 1, an abuser can be ordered to wear a tracking device if they've violated a restraining order. Illinois' Department of Corrections and Department of Juvenile Justice previously have used GPS to track sex offenders, according to the governor's office.

Cook County Assistant State's Attorney Ketki Steffen, the attorney in Cindy Bischof's case, said tracking devices would increase protections for domestic violence victims.

"It will also give them peace of mind," she said.

Massachusetts adopted a law last year that lets judges require electronic monitoring of people who violate personal protection orders. Michigan, Oklahoma and Hawaii followed suit this year, bringing to 11 the number of states with related measures already in place.

Illinois' Division of Probation Services will set standards to implement its program, the governor's office said.

The law also calls for an additional fine of at least \$200 for every penalty when there's a conviction for violating a restraining order. The money would go to the newly established Domestic Violence Surveillance Fund.

Blagojevich said he wants to talk to Michael Bischof about strengthening other laws to help domestic violence victims. Blagojevich said he could do that as part of a "Rewrite to Do Right" campaign he plans launch later this week.

Blagojevich said he intends to rewrite bills passed by the Legislature "to make them better for the people of our state." Lawmakers would have to approve the changes.

Depending on what bills Blagojevich rewrites, it could further inflame tensions with lawmakers he has feuded with and who are balking at a statewide construction program he wants them to pass.

Blagojevich said one of the bills he is interested in "taking positive action" on is a campaign finance reform measure. Lawmakers have voted to impose the state's first major restriction on money politicians can accept but Blagojevich has yet to sign it.

House Republican Leader Tom Cross told those gathered for Monday's event that it was a reminder the General Assembly could work together to impact people's lives in positive ways. Much of the attention as of late has been on feuding between lawmakers and the governor and the inability to agree on how to do a capital plan or how to pay for it.

"It's become a very frustrating time, today restores a little bit of that faith," Cross said.

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