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## Law aims to protect victims from stalkers

(<http://www.pioneerlocal.com/arlingtonheights/news/1092667,AH-Bischoflaw-080708-s1.article>)

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Stalkers and domestic abusers in Illinois will find it more difficult to surprise their victims.

On Monday, Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed legislation referred to as the Cindy Bischof Law, which will allow a judge to order someone charged with a violation of an order of protection to wear or carry a global positioning device. The family of Cindy Bischof pushed for such legislation after the 43-year-old Arlington Heights resident was fatally shot by an ex-boyfriend in March outside her real estate office in Elmhurst.

The law goes into effect Jan. 1.

Both the state senate and house passed the bill unanimously in May.

"My only wish is that we could have accomplished this in time to have helped Cindy Bischof," state Rep. Suzie Bassi, R-54th, the chief sponsor of the House version of the bill, said in a prepared statement.

Cindy Bischof herself had argued that people who violate restraining orders should have to wear electronic bracelets or similar detection devices so their victims could know if the stalker is in their vicinity. Bischof had obtained an order of protection against Michael L. Giroux because after they broke up and he moved out of her house, he returned when she was not home and vandalized the place. He continued to call her and try to see her, her family and friends said, until he waited for her to leave work March 7. After shooting Bischof, Giroux killed himself.

"GPS tracking is already used to monitor the activity of sex offenders and will ensure that domestic violence offenders do not get too close to their targets," state Rep. Sidney Mathias, R-53rd, a co-sponsor of the House bill, said in a prepared statement.

A judge may order someone charged with violating a protection order to wear or carry a global positioning system device as a condition of bail. But the law states that a person convicted of violating a protection order "shall be ordered" to carry or wear a GPS device "as a condition of parole, mandatory supervised release or early release."

Mathias and Bassi said the court would decide if the specific case warranted the need for GPS tracking.

Bassi said she hopes "this technology will allow victims to go about their days without living in constant fear of their abuser."

Anyone convicted of violating an order of protection also will have to pay a fine of at least \$200 to the Domestic Violence Surveillance Fund.



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