

DA, state senator team up to change parole system

State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, and El Dorado County District Attorney Vern Pierson today launched a joint effort to strengthen California's public safety protection in light of the circumstances surrounding Jaycee Lee Dugard's kidnapping and captivity.

Gaines and Pierson have scheduled a public meeting Aug. 3 at the Capitol with law enforcement leaders and victims' rights organizations to explore deficiencies in state law and identify potential legislative solutions to prevent these kinds of tragedies from occurring again.

"Jaycee's kidnapping and her 18 years spent in captivity were beyond reprehensible," Gaines said in a statement. "That's why I'm working with the El Dorado County District Attorney to examine what went wrong in the Dugard case, identify reforms to the system and introduce legislation to better protect our citizens from becoming the next victim."

The public hearing will include an analysis of the many shortcomings in federal and state parole supervision, as well as the initial investigation. The hearing will in part be informed by California Inspector General David R. Shaw's 2009 report on the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's supervision of registered sex-offender and lifetime parolee Phillip Garrido. The report uncovered a number of mistakes that let Dugard's rapist and kidnapper remain free and keep her in captivity.

Parole visited Garrido's home 60 times – failing to ever notice Dugard of the tent-shack compound out back where she lived with her two daughters fathered by Garrido.

The report noted that the CDCR also failed to train parole

agents to conduct home visits.

“If the system had worked the way it should have, Ms. Dugard and her two daughters would have been discovered merely 30-feet away,” Gaines said. “It’s hard to fathom that the backyard encampment where they were held captive went completely unnoticed for nearly two decades.”

On July 8, 2011, the United States District Court for the Northern District of California released a previously confidential report which characterizes Garrido’s federal parole supervision as “clearly substandard.”

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*