

Relatives of missing adults work to pass legislation across nation

Posted Mar. 25, 2007

3:15 PM

(Hartford-AP) _ The mother of a Waterbury man who disappeared in 2004 has joined a national lobbying effort to get states to pass better laws on how to handle missing adult cases.

There were no Amber Alerts or urgent police investigations when Janice Smolinski's 31-year-old son Billy vanished. Police made the family wait three days to report his disappearance because a neighbor believed he left town voluntarily. Smolinski says the family had to organize their own search parties and pressure police to take fingerprints from his truck. But Billy Smolinski remains missing.

The national Campaign for the Missing group is lobbying this year in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and several other states. Janice Smolinski says the system is not working and police don't take missing adult cases seriously enough. Just under half of the 109-thousand active cases in the National Crime Information Center's missing person file involve adults.

While the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children receives more than \$35 million a year from the federal government, the National Center for Missing Adults saw its federal aid cut to \$148,000.