



State of New York
Executive Chamber
Albany 12224

Andrew M. Cuomo
GOVERNOR

August 1, 2016

John Hanke
Chief Executive Officer
Niantic, Inc.
2 Bryant St #220
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. Hanke:

Protecting our children and ensuring their safety is our top priority, and the State of New York is moving swiftly to respond to troubling news that young children using Pokémon GO are being steered to locations in close proximity to, or even at, sex offender residences. The State has taken action to prohibit sex offenders from using this game, but we need your assistance to make certain that sex offenders will not continue to use Pokémon GO by technologically barring their use. Working together, we can ensure that this danger today does not escalate into a tragedy tomorrow.

As New York State's Attorney General, I introduced the Electronic Security and Targeting of Online Predators Act, which was ultimately signed into law and has led to numerous groundbreaking protections to keep thousands of sex offenders off-line and away from our children. It requires sex offenders to register and keep up-to-date all current email accounts, screen names, and any other Internet identifiers with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. This list is then given to more than two-dozen social networking companies on a weekly basis and those sites use it to purge offenders from their membership rosters.

A recent report by Senators Jeffrey D. Klein and Diane Savino clearly demonstrates that more must be done to protect our children from ending up at locations that pose a danger to themselves. In addition, a feature of the game – where, for a small fee, a "lure" can be purchased to intentionally encourage traffic to a particular location – also appears to have the potential to be abused by predators. That is why I have directed the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services to reach out to Niantic, Inc. to provide the most up-to-date information of offenders within the Sex Offender

Registry. With this information, we hope you will be able to prevent identified sex offenders from using this game. DCJS will also contact Apple and Google to inform them of these public safety concerns and will work with them to enhance user safety. Software developers that operate augmented reality games like Pokémon GO should be entitled to the same information that is regularly shared with companies like Facebook, Apple and Microsoft.

Also at my direction, the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision has imposed a new condition of parole for sex offenders under community supervision. This new condition will prohibit them from downloading, accessing, or otherwise engaging in any Internet enabled gaming activities, including Pokémon GO.

Pokémon GO has generated enormous popularity among users across New York and beyond. Through these common sense actions, we can together act swiftly to create a safer environment for Pokémon GO players and all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew M. Cuomo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "C".

ANDREW M. CUOMO