

Casey Anthony Verdict Sparks Missing Child Law Petition



AP Images/Orange County Sheriff's Office, File

Although Casey Anthony was found not guilty of first degree murder and manslaughter in the case of her 2-year-old daughter Caylee's death, controversy continues to swirl around the fact that she never notified law enforcement the toddler was missing.

But Caylee's death may not be in vain. The Anthony case has inspired a viral petition campaign to support "Caylee's Law," legislation that would make a parent's failure to notify law enforcement of a child's disappearance a felony.

As the facts of the case detail, Caylee was last seen on June 16, 2008. Anthony never called the police. And Caylee's grandmother, Cindy Anthony, waited a month to notify law enforcement.

"When I saw that Casey Anthony had been found not guilty in the murder of little Caylee, and that she was only being convicted of lying to the police about her disappearance, I was sickened," says Michelle Crowder, who launched the petition. "I could not believe she was not being charged with child neglect or endangerment, or even obstruction of justice."

So far, nearly 50,000 people in all 50 states have joined a campaign calling for called "Caylee's Law." Nearly 2,000 people have signed the "Caylee's Law" petition each hour since it was launched. The petition specifically asks Congress to create a law that makes it a federal offense and a felony for a parent or guardian not to immediately call police to report a missing child.

"I saw a page on Facebook proposing that a law be made, but I saw nothing about a petition being started for it," Crowder says. "I am hoping that this will be made into a federal law so that no other child's life, disappearance and/or death is treated in the manner that poor Caylee's was treated. No child deserves that."