



86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TEXAS PTA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

HUMAN TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN

Pursue legislation protecting children and youth from the exploitation and victimization of human trafficking, and support legislation to waive any criminal responsibility if they are apprehended for criminal activity orchestrated by the trafficker.

BACKGROUND

- Sex-trafficking is one of the most violent felonies and yet the law recognizes it as a non-violent felony. If a person has sex with a child and commits statutory rape, he receives a higher penalty than if that same person has sex with that same child but hands her a \$20 bill.
- There is no single profile for trafficking victims; trafficking occurs to adults and minors in rural, suburban, or urban communities.
- Children are potential victims by traffickers due to lack of education, poverty, lack of employment opportunities, and an expanding globalized sex industry.
- The FBI classified human trafficking as the third largest and fastest growing criminal enterprise in the world, with estimates of a \$10 billion business in America alone.
- According to the Texas Attorney General, there are 79,000 victims of youth and minor sex trafficking in Texas at any given time.
- According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, Texas accounted for 665 out of the 7,600 human trafficking cases reported in 2016, trailing only behind California.
- KHOU-TV investigative report of records from June 2014 - December 2016 concluded that “two-thirds of those criminals charged with sex- trafficking crimes got probation instead of jail or prison time” in Harris County.
- Texas Governor Greg Abbott released two plans in 2018, “Preventing Crime, Protecting Texans, Punishing Criminals” and “Safeguarding, Securing, and Serving”, announcing his proposals to combat sex and human trafficking.