



SEAN M. LYNN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
31st District

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

COMMITTEES
Judiciary, Chair
Education
Agriculture

House Judiciary Committee Meeting Minutes 4.10.19

Vice-Chair Griffith called the meeting to order at 1:09 p.m. Members present included: Reps. Cooke, Mitchell, Gray, Vanderwende, Bush, Brady, Smyk, and Spiegelman.

Vice-Chair Griffith introduced **HB 102, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 11 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO CRIMES.**

Rep. K. Williams, the prime sponsor, explained that the bill allows persons arrested or convicted of a crime to file for a pardon, expungement, or a motion to vacate judgement if the crime is not a violent felony and a direct result of the person being a victim of human trafficking. She added that the bill makes changes to the Human Trafficking Interagency by adding an additional member from the judicial branch and from the Department of Education.

Rep. K. Williams explained that Shared Hope International released state report cards grading criminal relief for victims of human trafficking in March of 2019. She added that the report demonstrated how crimes committed stemmed from original victimization in human trafficking. She added that the resulting criminal records negatively impact their lives further by prohibiting them from furthering their education, obtaining housing, and more.

Rep. K. Williams added survivors of human trafficking lack a voice in the public and deserve advocacy from legislators. She thanked the Human Trafficking Interagency and advocates in attendance.

Vice-Chair Griffith added that human trafficking victims are affected in an array of communities, including those who were victims of domestic violence.

Vice-Chair Griffith opened the floor to public comment.

President Nick Wasileski from the Delaware Coalition for Open Government supported the bill because of the necessity to protect victims of human trafficking from being further victimized by the criminal justice system. A full statement from President Wasileski is attached to the minutes.

Board Member Letty Diswood from the Delaware Coalition for Open Government supported the bill and urged the committee to further review Delaware LLCs that act as fronts for sex trafficking. A full statement from Ms. Diswood is attached.

Policy Coordinator Marcy Rezac from the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence supported any efforts to provide further protections to victims of domestic violence.



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Lisa Minutola, Chief of Legal Services at the Office of Defense Services (ODS) explained that the bill expanded universal defenses for petitions for expungement. She added that a range of offenses are included, only violent felonies are excluded. She added that her experience in the ODS has made clear that further victimization occurs for those who have survived human trafficking experiences.

Board Member Diana Suchodolski from Meet Me at the Well supported the bill because professional pathways are obstructed for victims of human trafficking, especially those who were victimized in their youth.

Chair Leslie Brower from the Human Trafficking Interagency Council supported the bill. She explained that the council's purpose is to provide sustainable services to victims but it is difficult due to tracking issues.

Chair Brower added that the most recent data suggests that at 25 youth human trafficking cases existed in 2018. She added that the council's first report highlighted the difficult path for victims as they attempt to progress in life.

Chair Brower added that when children are victimized their identity is wrapped up in their victimization experiences which harms their growth in adulthood.

Staff Attorney Kelly Head from the Community Legal Aid Society supported the bill because of her work with victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. She explained that victims are coerced or forced to commit crimes. She noted that traffickers exert soft power on victims who become dependent on the traffickers as a result, therefore, victims may shoplift food in an attempt to support themselves.

Rep. Mitchell supported the bill due to experiences shared from his family member who works directly with human trafficking issues.

Rep. K. Williams thanked former Rep. Keeley for her work to highlight issues related to the bill.

Vice-Chair Griffith asked why there is a need to the Human Trafficking Interagency Council to add a member for the Department of Education.

Chair Brower replied that some victims are school-aged children and including schools helps with surveillance of possible victims.

Rep. Vanderwende asked about a technical correction to the number of members on the Human Trafficking Interagency Council.

Rep. Williams confirmed that HA 1 to HB 102 correctly counts the number of members on the Human Trafficking Interagency Coordinating Council at 15, not 16.

Vice-Chair Griffith requested a motion.



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A motion was made by Rep. Mitchell and seconded by Rep. Bush to release HB 102 from committee; motion carried. Yes=8 (Griffith, Cooke, Bush, Mitchell, Gray, Smyk, Spiegelman, Vanderwende); No=0; Absent=3 (Lynn, Dorsey Walker, Brady). HB 102 was released from committee with a F=0, M=7, U=0 vote.

Vice-Chair Griffith adjourned the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Eric Hastings

Speaker List:

Nick Wasileski — President, Delaware Coalition for Open Government

Letty Diswood — Board Member, Delaware Coalition for Open Government, and League of Women Voters

Marcey Rezac — Policy Coordinator, Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Lisa Minutola — Chief of Legal Services, Office of Defense Services

Diana Suchodolski — Board Member, Meet Me at the Well

Leslie Brower — Chair, Human Trafficking Interagency Council

Kelly Head — Staff Attorney, Community Legal Aid Society



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