

# Judiciary Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1117

AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTIONS FOR PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN  
TRAFFICKED AND ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING IN

**Title:** PERSONS.

**Vote Date:** 3/30/2023

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/3/2023

**File No.:**

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## SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

## REASONS FOR BILL:

Human trafficking and sexual assault are important and prevalent issues in the state and there is a need for increased prevention measures. As a result, victims of human trafficking and sexual assault need more protection under Connecticut state law as they are more likely to experience discrimination and have other difficulties assimilating back into their lives.

## SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language removes former Sections 1 and 2 from the bill.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Commissioner Vannessa Dorantes, Department of Children and Families:** She supports this bill stating it will assist in the prevention of trafficking so more children do not fall prey and ensure employment opportunities for those who have been victimized.

**State Victim Advocate Natasha Pierre, Office of the Victim Advocate:** She supports this bill as it will assist victims as they work to rebuild their lives and sends the message that trafficking will not be tolerated at hotels or motels.

**Tanya Hughes, Executive Director, Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO):** She supports this bill stating that CHRO looks forward to working with the

committee and advocates to make sure the bill is structured in a way that will best help these individuals.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

**Liza Andrews, Director of Public Policy, CCADV:** She supports this bill stating section 1 of the bill will aid in helping victims gain employment opportunities as they deal with the aftermath and trauma of the abuse they experienced, and states that section 3 of the bill will create a roadblock in the sexual exploitation of adults and children as 80% of forced commercial sex acts occur at a motel or hotel.

**Ashley Cerruto, Susan B. Anthony Project:** She supports this bill stating it would prevent discrimination against victims of sexual assault and human trafficking and aid those with disabilities, as they may face increased risk of trafficking and/or require different after-care services.

**Mary Lee Kiernan, President and CEO, YWCA Greenwich:** She supports this bill as it rightfully prohibits employer discrimination against victims, and it aids those with disabilities as they are often at a higher risk for being a victim of human trafficking.

**Rosemary Lopez, Legislative Policy Analyst, CWCSEO:** She supports this bill stating the recognition of sexual assault and trafficking victims as protected persons through providing better access to employment and other opportunities will help victims as they work to rebuild their lives.

**Ashley Repar, Legal Intern, Center for Children's Advocacy:** She supports this bill while offering three suggestions to better its protection for victims. These suggestions include revising the definition of stalking, adding new additions that deter trafficking activity that preys on the most vulnerable, and including trafficking victims under Connecticut's employment discrimination statutes.

**Susan Schnitzer, President and CEO, CIRI:** She supports this bill stating it is vital that victims of sexual assault and trafficking are protected under employment provisions and are protected at points of vulnerability such as hotels and motels.

**Erin Williamson, Love 146:** She overall supports this bill as it ensures greater protections for survivors of human trafficking and sexual assault but has concerns that sections 3 and 4 may have unintended consequences for vulnerable populations, unrelated to the reduction of human trafficking.

**Yvette Young, Associate Vice President, Village for Families and Children:** She supports this bill stating trafficking victims should be protected under the state's employment discrimination provisions; stalking victims deserve civil protection; and hotels, motels and similar lodgings should be prohibited from offering hourly rates.

**Bridget Koestner, Policy Manager, CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence:** She supports this bill stating by extending protections in employment, and adding protections in housing, public accommodations, and credit transactions, CT can send a strong signal that it supports all survivors in their pursuit of healing and wellbeing following an assault.

**Peter Wolfgang, President, Family Institute of Connecticut Action:** He supports this bill while also encouraging the committee to amend and enforce a requirement for proof of residency and age for women seeking abortion services, as this would be an additional measure to prevent trafficking in minor persons.

**Senator Cathy Osten, Connecticut General Assembly:** She supports this bill stating by barring operators of a hotel, motel, or similar lodging from offering an hourly rate for any sleeping accommodation, we can prevent instances of human trafficking from occurring in our state at these locales.

**18 Connecticut Residents submitted testimony:** They support this bill stating it will help prohibit discrimination by employers against victims of sexual assault and human trafficking, expand on the grounds for seeking protective orders beyond fear for physical safety, and protect those with disabilities, as they may face increased risk of trafficking and/or require different after-care services.

- ***Brittany Bauch***
- ***Alice Goodrich***
- ***Marcella Kurowski***
- ***Marilyn Murray***
- ***Jennifer Orlando***
- ***Kathleen Pasakarnis***
- ***Kathryn Smith***
- ***Josh Stasko***
- ***Roberta Senter***
- ***Kailyn Campbell***
- ***Christina Daisey***
- ***Jennifer Franz***
- ***Rachel Hiskes***
- ***Felicia Ingram***
- ***Barbara Jeanne Lafond***
- ***Tallitha Richardson***
- ***Bridget Stasko***
- ***Nita Vitaliano***

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by:** Riley St. Pierre

**Date:** April 3, 2023