



ANCHORAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Dan Sullivan, Mayor

4501 Elmore Road • Anchorage, Alaska 99507-1599
Telephone (907) 786-8500



Service since 1921

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Governor Parnell:

I am writing you to state the support of the Anchorage Police Department for the passage of House Bill 359, which enhances the state's Sex Trafficking laws. As you well know, this measure would protect Alaska's children by increasing the seriousness of many sex related acts that may be perpetrated against them, and by improving the ability of police and prosecutors to apprehend and convict sexual predators.

APD Vice Sergeant Kathy Lacey, our resident expert in these matters, recently testified in support of this bill. She did so at my direction, and was specifically authorized to speak on behalf of the APD on this matter. I should add that Mayor Sullivan is aware of our position, and has indicated his approval as well.

We agree with your Choose Respect program, and believe that combating interpersonal violence must be a priority for state and municipal government, and of our citizens. Children may have been underrepresented somewhat in this effort up until now. Among its other accomplishments, HB 359 corrects this condition.

Thank you for your work in advancing this bill. Please let us know what else we can do to assist in its passage.

Sincerely,

Mark T. Mew
Chief of Police



March 27, 2012

pb
907 793.3600
fb
907 793.3602
cc
CITC.org

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor
State of Alaska
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell:

Exploitation of Alaska's youth and vulnerable women is of grave concern, especially in the area of sex/human trafficking. Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) applauds your initiative to update and increase penalties for the prosecution of individuals who conspire to commit human trafficking.

House Bill 359/Senate Bill 218, An Act relating to conspiracy to commit human trafficking in the first degree or sex trafficking in the first degree; relating to the crime of distribution of indecent material to minors, the crime of online enticement of a minor, the crime of prostitution, and the crime of sex trafficking; etc., will send a strong signal to those who take advantage of Alaska's youth and will also serve to deter perpetrators in committing these criminal activities.

Vulnerable youth – those who are homeless, abused, runaways, lacking healthy family structure – are so often the victims and targeted for sex trafficking. They are often preyed upon and easily trapped by having no place else to go. This is particularly true for young people and women who leave the village to come to Anchorage. And it is important to recognize, as your bill does, that the victims are not committing the crime of prostitution, but are rather victims of the sex trafficker.

Thank you for your efforts to advance stronger penalties against sex trafficking and for acknowledging the need to protect those who are forced into selling their bodies. CITC supports your work in the deterrence of the tragic crime of sex trafficking and hopes that this will prevent continued abuse of our young in this criminal activity.

Sincerely,

Kristin English, CEO for O'Neill

Gloria O'Neill
President/CEO

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

VIOLENT CRIMES COMPENSATION BOARD

SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR

P.O. BOX 110230
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0230
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March 23, 2012

Honorable Governor Sean Parnell
P.O. Box 110001
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: House Bill, No. 359: Sex Crimes

Dear Governor Parnell,

I write on behalf of the Violent Crimes Compensation Board to thank you for introducing House Bill 359 and to express the Board's full support. The proposed legislation is extremely welcome, and reflects a victim-centered approach to the serious issue of sex trafficking.

Over the course of the last few years, the Board has seen 23 claims stemming from trafficking investigations, and has paid out over \$150,000 in compensation or assistance to trafficking victims. This compensation has been in the form of payment for mental health counseling, and for drug and alcohol treatment programs, as well as for medical expenses, and assistance in relocation to a safer environment. None of these claims were for victims who were trafficked *to* Alaska. They were Alaskan residents who were the victims of sex trafficking within Alaska.

As Board members, we have seen the terrible results of sex trafficking on the lives of young women and their families. Very often these victims are young vulnerable native women, including minors, who have left their villages and come to Anchorage, only to find themselves homeless and alone. These young women and girls are specifically targeted by predatory sex traffickers; often they are given enticements in the form of clothing, and offered a place to stay, but are then abused, beaten, sexually assaulted, deliberately addicted to controlled substances and alcohol and then prostituted out to make money for their abusers. These victims should not be labeled with the actions of those who exploit them.

Respectfully submitted



Gerald Godfrey
Chair, Violent Crimes Compensation Board

03/23/2012
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12:00 PM

STATE OF
ALASKA
GOVERNOR



March 26, 2012

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Office of the Governor
State Capitol, Third Floor
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Governor Parnell,

On behalf of the Mary Magdalene Home Alaska (MMHA) Board of Directors, I am submitting this letter in support of House Bill 359, sex trafficking and video conferencing. MMHA is a private, faith-based nonprofit operating since 1995 whose mission is to support and assist women who are working to escape a life of sexual exploitation and prostitution.

We know from experience many women entered this life as a youth. National statistics suggest that the average age of entry into prostitution is early to mid teens. Homeless and vulnerable youth are ensnared by pimps, working prostitutes, drug addicts and other predators. Some youth are taught to turn tricks by their mothers or mothers' pimps. Many were repeatedly sexually assaulted, even since toddlerhood, and came to realize that their bodies were a tool and they should learn to use it for their own advantage. They know no other life and see no other way to survive.

We support the intent of the bill to change the language of discourse and legal action from promoting prostitution to sex trafficking, facilitating the broader understanding that the overwhelming majority of children placed into prostitution are not there by choice, but because they perceive no other choice. We support the increased penalties for patrons of prostitution, as patrons need to understand and be accountable for their role in the sexual exploitation of others. We support including sex trafficking in the first degree as a "serious felony offense" enabling prosecution of trafficking offenders.

We thank you for your transmission of this bill and look forward to its prompt passage.

Sincerely,

Alice Myers
Treasurer, Board of Directors
Mary Magdalene Home Alaska



Governor Sean Parnell
State Capital Building
Juneau, AK

March 22, 2012
Dear Governor Sean Parnell,

Thank you for introduction of House Bill 359: *"An Act relating to conspiracy to commit human trafficking in the first degree or sex trafficking in the first degree; relating to the crime of furnishing indecent material to minors, the crime of online enticement of a minor, the crime of prostitution, and the crime of sex trafficking; relating to forfeiture of property used in prostitution offenses; relating to sex offender registration; relating to testimony by video conference; adding Rule 38.3, Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure; and providing for an effective date."* The bill includes a number of provisions that specifically protect the youth we serve.

Covenant House provides basic necessities (shelter, food, clothing and healthcare) and wrap around services (transitional living and educational, vocational and life skills assistance) to homeless and runaway youth in Alaska. Although located in Anchorage, we serve youth from all over Alaska. In FY2011, we served over 4,000 individual youth and nearly 40% of our kids are Alaska Native.

HB 359 seeks to update and improve Alaska's sex/human trafficking statutes and allows for more aggressive prosecution of individuals engaged in the exploitation of youth. CHA shelters and provides services to victims of sex trafficking every single day. Sex trafficking is a highly prevalent, but mostly invisible crime. CHA youth are particularly vulnerable to trafficking activities because of their lack of strong support systems, history of abuse (46% of CHA girls report sexual abuse and 33% of our youth have been in foster care) and their desperate need for essentials like shelter and food.

HB 359 clarifies the victim status of children and youth caught in organized human trafficking and updates the language we use to describe this crime. It holds the perpetrators providing the demand for sex trafficking accountable and adds trafficking to currently existing conspiracy statutes.

The actions of traffickers are deliberate and cruel. Traffickers target some of the most vulnerable individuals in Alaska: unaccompanied homeless youth, abused children and children in foster care because these are often the most invisible individuals as well. Victims are coerced, emotionally and physically, and often remained trapped by "pimps" for years. Trafficking is crime of calculated torture and HB 359 addresses it as so, infusing severe penalties into statute for perpetrators in Alaska. Please do not hesitate to contact me for questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Deirdre A. Cronin

Deirdre A. Cronin
Executive Director

March 26, 2012

Governor Sean Parnell
ALASKA STATE CAPITAL BUILDING, Third Floor
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell,

I've read your Bill (HB 359) that includes "sex trafficking" into Alaska law and greatly appreciate what you've done about this horrendous crime. Now we must hope that our legislature will do what is right and pass your recommendations and severely punish the real criminals; the pimps, traffickers, facilitators and anyone else who profits from human trafficking and provide the much needed help for victims.

As a 35 year citizen of Alaska, and part of the faith community, I am greatly concerned about this issue. I've attended several schools and conferences with YWAM (Youth With A Mission) in San Francisco, Costa Rica and Amsterdam addressing the problem of human trafficking, particularly as it pertains to the sexual exploitation of minors. I am passionate about this problem and support HB 359.

Sincerely,



Dolly Caswell

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March 23rd, 2012

Dear Governor Parnell,

I write to you in support of HB 359 today and appreciate your efforts to make the beautiful State of Alaska a safer place for children and women. I have a very strong opinion about the growing trend in the State of Alaska as it relates to the trafficking of women and children for sexual crimes. I continue to serve on the Violent Crimes Compensation Board for the State of Alaska and there is an alarming increase in the number of women with children in other states being brought to Alaska to become victims of repeated sexual abuse inclusive of the woman, her children, and sometimes the dog. I feel very strongly that offenders that force children into sexual human trafficking should have in the State of Alaska a sentence of a definite term of imprisonment of not more than 99 years and a definite termed sentenced for any human sex trafficking offense against a child younger than the age of 18. In the State of Alaska we are currently seeing an alarming increase in HIV, syphilis, and gonorrhea sexually transmitted diseases. These offenders usually entice large numbers of women and children into their prostitution human sex trafficking rings by promising them phones, video games, money, drugs, alcohol, and then subsequently keep these victims drugged and beaten in order to force the victims to continue to prostitute themselves for the monetary gains of these offenders. I think 99 years is not long enough for these offenders as often times we see the same offender and leaders of such organized groups of women and children sex trafficking continue the same criminal behavior once the sentence is completed. I see in the trauma resuscitation rooms at the hospital women and children that are often times beaten until unrecognizable, infected with lifelong sexually transmitted diseases, and sometimes even dead on arrival. Thank you for allowing me to participate in this effort. If any questions please email me or you may contact me directly at 907-244-1689.

Thanks again,

Regina Chennault, M.D.