



Safe Children, Stable Families, Supportive Communities

February 13, 2020  
House Criminal Justice  
Proponent Testimony, SB 13  
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Chair Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee. The Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) is a membership-driven association of Ohio's county public children service agencies that advocates for and promotes children services programs and sound public policy for safe children, stable families, and supportive communities. We appreciate the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony for Senate Bill 13, the Protect Trafficked Minors Act.

Children service agencies play a key role in every community's response to the trafficking of children. They also play a role in the prevention of human trafficking by serving children at greater risk of future victimization. But agencies cannot address human trafficking alone; multidisciplinary, collaborative approaches that bring together juvenile justice, law enforcement, homeless and runaway youth services, victim service providers, mental health professionals, and others are required to address the needs of trafficked youth.

PCSAO and its member agencies support SB 13 because it increases protections for juvenile victims of human trafficking. Eliminating the distinction between the trafficking of a minor under the age of sixteen and the trafficking of a minor who is sixteen or seventeen will bring Ohio law in line with federal law and 49 other states that recognize that any minor involved in commercial sexual exploitation should be considered a victim of human trafficking. SB 13 closes a significant gap that traffickers utilize to exploit children who are sixteen or seventeen and are not developmentally different from children who are fifteen or younger.

We appreciate the General Assembly's continuing efforts on behalf of human trafficking victims. Please support SB 13 to strengthen Ohio's fight against human trafficking.

Thank you.