

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF H.B. 461

*From Alexis, a sex-trafficking survivor*

Dear Committee:

Thanks for taking the time to listen to my testimony. I am so happy that you are considering a new law that would allow 16 and 17-year-old victims to have the same protections as other minors.

I met my trafficker when I was a teenager. At first, he was very sweet to me, and I fell in love and had a child with him. Soon after, however, I discovered that he was trafficking girls and women for money. He then began trafficking me. He forced me to sleep with men and to turn over all of my money to him. He was verbally and physically abusive to me and he threatened me if I tried to escape. I was only able to escape the situation after my trafficker was arrested.

I have first-hand knowledge of how vulnerable teenagers can be. It is so easy for them to get involved in commercial sexual exploitation and to be exploited by adults. For this reason, H.B. 461 is very important to protect 16 and 17-year olds so that they are given the same protections that all minors currently have.

Please vote in favor of this bill and help teenagers in Ohio.

Sincerely,

Alexis

Contact info: Alexis is a client of the Northeast Ohio Human Trafficking Clinic and can be reached at [maurenguirus@gmail.com](mailto:maurenguirus@gmail.com).