



Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

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Executive Director
Senate Bill 5
Proponent Testimony
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Chair Eklund, Vice-Chair Manning, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer proponent testimony on Senate Bill 5, a bill to increase the penalties for promoting prostitution.

Under current law the offense of promoting prostitution is generally a fourth degree felony. This penalty is enhanced to a felony of the third degree if the prostitute is a minor. An offender is subject to a mandatory prison term only when there is also a specification in the indictment that the offense was committed in furtherance of human trafficking. The penalty is always a fourth degree felony regardless of the number of times an individual is convicted of promoting prostitution. This provides little deterrent to repeat violators, does not provide what we feel is appropriate punishment for repeat violations, and does not appropriately protect the public from those who continue to promote prostitution.

Senate Bill 5 provides for an increased penalty for individuals with previous convictions for promoting prostitution. Importantly, the bill also provides for an increased penalty for individuals who are convicted of trafficking in drugs along with promoting prostitution. Drug abuse leaves individuals more vulnerable to prostitution by creating a means to fuel their addiction. It makes them easier targets for offenders.

Like the bill sponsors, we believe that the offenses of human trafficking and promoting prostitution can be curtailed by imposing stiffer penalties on those who commit these crimes. By providing for graduated penalties, Senate Bill 5 will help deter these crimes and ensure that individuals who continue to victimize the vulnerable spend more time in prison. This promotes safety for victims and our communities.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions.