



Safe Children, Stable Families, Supportive Communities

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Senate Judiciary Committee
Proponent Testimony, SB 13
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To Chair Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the committee. Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) is a membership-driven association of Ohio's county public children services agencies. We advocate 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 services 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.

This is why we support SB 13, as 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 minor who is sixteen or seventeen will bring Ohio law in line with the federal law and 49 other states that recognize that any minor involved in commercial sexual exploitation should be considered a victim of human trafficking. SB13 closes a significant gap that traffickers utilize to exploit children who are sixteen or seventeen who are not developmentally different from children who are fifteen or younger.

We appreciate Senator Fedor's continuing leadership on behalf of human trafficking victims as well as the General Assembly's support. Please support SB13 to strengthen Ohio's fight against human trafficking.

Thank you.