

HB 152 -- SEXUAL TRAFFICKING OF A CHILD

SPONSOR: Haahr

COMMITTEE ACTIONS: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Civil and Criminal Proceedings by a vote of 9 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill adds knowingly advertising a specified minor to participate in a commercial sex act, performance, or the production of explicit sexual material to the offenses of sexual trafficking of a child in the first degree, sexual trafficking of a child in the second degree, sexual trafficking of a child, and sexual trafficking of a child under the age of 12.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill gives state and local prosecutors one more tool to address human trafficking in this state. Human trafficking generates \$9.5 billion in the United States. The City of St. Louis is one of the top four human trafficking areas in the country. There are certain smart device applications and web pages that are able to give these human traffickers cover so that they are able to advertise the victims for services. Congresswoman Wagner is introducing companion legislation at the federal level that will give federal prosecutors the same tool to use in their prosecutions of human trafficking.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Haahr; Missouri Coalition of Children's Agencies; Colleen S. Coble; Missouri Sheriffs Association; Riley Dean, Tamara Herman, and Nanette Ward, Central Missouri Stop Human Trafficking Coalition; Missouri Children's Leadership Council; Jessica Luebbert; Missouri Catholic Conference; Kerry K. Messer; Missouri Family Policy Council; Kimberly Ritter, Exchange Initiative; Missouri Kids First; and Ann Wagner.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.