

HCS HB 2561 -- HUMAN TRAFFICKING

SPONSOR: Brown (94)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Social Services by a vote of 7 to 0.

This bill requires various establishments, specified in the bill, to display a poster in a conspicuous place near the entrance of the establishment, starting March 1, 2017, that provides information regarding human trafficking, including what it is and resources victims have for getting help. Any establishment required to display the poster that fails to display the poster will be subject to the penalty provisions of this bill.

The Department of Public Safety will create the poster before January 1, 2017, and the poster will be made available for print on the department's website.

The bill requires that victims of domestic assault are afforded certain specified rights, including the right to be notified when their assailant is being released on bond or for any other reason.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that human trafficking is modern day slavery. Posters raise awareness by providing access to information for victims and those who might observe human trafficking or want to know more about how to spot human trafficking. Posters also allow victims to self identify. If a person is a victim of human trafficking, it can be very dangerous for him or her to be caught by the trafficker with information or a number in their pocket, so it is very important that the information is openly displayed in places where victims might see it. Currently 25 other states either encourage or mandate the posting of these posters.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Brown; Ellen Alper, National Council Of Jewish Women - St. Louis; Jessica Meyers, Crime Victim Advocacy Center - St. Louis; Christine McDonald, Restoration House Of Greater Kansas City; Empower Missouri; and Planned Parenthood Advocates In Missouri.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.