

HB 1706 -- HUMAN TRAFFICKING

SPONSOR: Myers

This bill establishes the "Committee on Sex and Human Trafficking Training", which will be composed of six members, including, among others, a representative of the Attorney General's Office, a representative of the Department of Public Safety, and a juvenile officer. The committee must annually evaluate and establish guidelines for required sex and human trafficking training. The committee will dissolve on August 28, 2029.

The Department of Health and Senior Services will require each EMT, including each paramedic, to receive five hours of sex and human trafficking training as part of continuing education requirements for relicensure every five years. Each certified nursing assistant, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, advanced practice registered nurse, and juvenile officer must complete one hour of sex and human trafficking training annually. Social workers will be required to complete two hours of sex and human trafficking training for license renewal. Lastly, each peace officer will be required to receive two hours of sex and human trafficking training within the law enforcement continuing education one-year reporting period.

Currently, under certain circumstances, a statement made by a child under the age of 14 or by a vulnerable person, or the visual and aural recording of a verbal or nonverbal statement of such child or vulnerable person, is admissible into evidence in criminal proceedings as substantive evidence to prove the truth of the matter asserted. This bill increases the age to a child under the age of 18 and it amends the definition of "vulnerable person" to include a person whose developmental level does not exceed that of an ordinary child of 17 years of age, increased from 14 years of age.

Currently, a person 21 years old or older commits the offense of enticement of a child if he or she satisfies the elements of the offense and the child is under 15 years old. This bill increases the age of the child to under 17 years old.

The bill also provides that a person who pled guilty to or was found guilty of certain sexual offenses, specified in the bill, will be required to pay \$5,000 in restitution payable to the state to be deposited into the Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation Fund. Upon receipt of money from the Fund, a county must allocate disbursement of the funds according to the requirements in the bill.