



CHICAGO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

PREDATOR ACCOUNTABILITY BILL

OVERVIEW

Sixty-two percent (62%) of women in the sex trade are prostituted before the age of 18. Research and evidence suggests that the sex trade is inherently coercive, abusive and exploitative. Individuals, organizations and entities often recruit and maintain persons, largely women and girls, into the sex trade through predatory behaviors such as luring runaways, exploiting survival needs of homeless persons, extortion and blackmail, violence, threats and intimidation, exploiting language barriers, interfering with communication, etc.

This legislation allows persons who have been or are subjected to the sex trade in Illinois seek civil damages and remedies from individuals and/or entities that profited from or maintained them in the sex trade.

WHY THIS LEGISLATION IS NEEDED IN ILLINOIS

- In 2004 in Chicago, Rockford, Springfield, Peoria and Rock Island, the vast majority of all prostitution related arrests are of the person prostituting; between zero to five percent of arrests are of pimps and panderers.
- The vast majority of persons in the sex trade suffer from long-term physical and emotional pain, often resulting in mental illness, physical disabilities and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Consequently, these experiences often result in a person's inability to maintain stable employment.
- Existing state laws offer limited civil recourse for those abused in the sex trade to be able to hold the predators accountable for specific actions they perpetrated. Legislation that does afford victims of these crimes recourse currently exists in Florida, Minnesota and Hawaii. In these states, persons in the sex trade have been able to hold their predators accountable for monetary damages to compensate them for the pain and suffering they experienced.

FACTS

In Chicago, 16,000-25,000 women are involved in prostitution over the course of a year. 6,500 youth are prostituted in Illinois every year. Forms of the sex trade include but are not limited to, street level sex trade activity, strip clubs, pornography, escort services and in-call operations.

Recent research indicates:

- 40-50% of women in prostitution give a cut of their earnings to a pimp
- 77% of these women believe they would face physical harm if they did not give their pimps a cut
- 75% of women in prostitution are victims of sexual assault
- 86% of women in prostitution are victims of some form of domestic violence
- 66% of women in prostitution were victims of incest
- 50% of women in prostitution experience homelessness

CIVIL RECOURSE

Under this legislation predators can be held liable for economic loss, damages for personal injury and disease, and mental and emotional harm. Those who will most likely be held accountable under this law are individuals and entities that recruit, traffic, maintain and profited from persons in the sex trade be they pimps, abusive family members, or agencies whose false advertising tricks persons into illegal sex trade activities.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

An individual formerly or currently involved in the sex trade will have to prove, in civil court, that the defendant profited from, pimped, recruited, trafficked and/or maintained the plaintiff in the sex trade. Then, the plaintiff will have to detail the pain and suffering that he or she experienced as a result of the defendants' actions. A judge will then decide what relief, if any, to award the plaintiff.