
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SEX TRAFFICKING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that sex trafficking is a
2 pervasive problem that is part of the larger phenomenon of
3 commercial sexual exploitation. A 2020 report by the Office of
4 Sex Trafficking Intervention Research of Arizona State
5 University and the Hawaii state commission on the status of
6 women noted that sex trafficking victims have been found
7 throughout Hawaii's urban and rural areas and include youth who
8 attend school. The report also observed that the "lack of a
9 general understanding of the scope and complexity of sex
10 trafficking in Hawaii has allowed the victimization of Hawaii
11 residents to continue". Similarly, the National Human
12 Trafficking Resource Center observed that the widespread lack of
13 awareness and understanding of human trafficking has resulted in
14 low levels of survivor identification by the people who most
15 often encounter them. Because trafficking occurs in legitimate
16 business settings and residential neighborhoods in addition to
17 underground markets, exploited or trafficked persons are often



1 in plain view and interacting with unsuspecting community
2 members.

3 The legislature also finds that the adverse impacts of sex
4 trafficking are far-reaching and affect individuals, families,
5 and communities. Further, traffickers may target school-aged
6 children by having classmates or peers befriend the victim and
7 lure the victim to parties and other activities. Traffickers
8 also use social media platforms and websites to attract
9 potential victims. However, victims are often reluctant to
10 report their traffickers, who commonly employ tactics such as
11 emotional manipulation and control, intimidation, threats, and
12 deceit. In some cases, the trafficker may be a family member or
13 romantic partner of the victim.

14 For these reasons, the legislature recognizes the urgent
15 need for educational and outreach activities that will help to
16 identify and prevent sex trafficking before it occurs.

17 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require:

- 18 (1) The posting of informational placards containing
19 information on sex trafficking and resources available
20 to sex trafficking victims in public buildings and at
21 other specified locations;



1 (2) The department of education to provide training to
 2 teachers, school administrators, and other school
 3 personnel on the dynamics of sex trafficking and
 4 strategies for prevention and response; and

5 (3) The department of the attorney general to develop and
 6 implement a series of public education and outreach
 7 events on the dynamics of sex trafficking and the
 8 importance of community involvement in sex trafficking
 9 prevention and response efforts, and to appropriate
 10 moneys to the department for this purpose.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 27, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
 12 by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately designated
 13 and to read as follows:

14 "§27- Sex trafficking prevention; posting of notice
 15 required. (a) Each of the locations specified below, upon the
 16 availability of the model placard described in subsection (c),
 17 shall have posted in a conspicuous place near the public
 18 entrance or in another conspicuous location in clear view of the
 19 public and employees, and in a place where similar notices are
 20 customarily posted, an informational placard that complies with
 21 the requirements of this section:



- 1 (1) All offices of state agencies under the executive,
2 judicial, and legislative branches;
- 3 (2) All offices of county agencies;
- 4 (3) All school campuses under the jurisdiction of the
5 department of education; and
- 6 (4) All offices and classrooms at each school campus in
7 the university of Hawaii system.
- 8 (b) The informational placard required to be posted
9 pursuant to subsection (a) shall be at least eight and one-half
10 inches by eleven inches in size, written in a sixteen-point font
11 or larger, and shall include:
- 12 (1) An explanation of sex trafficking and typical forms of
13 sex trafficking;
- 14 (2) A statement that victims of sex trafficking are
15 protected under federal and state law;
- 16 (3) Information on resources and support, including the
17 National Human Trafficking Hotline; and
- 18 (4) Detailed information on the National Human Trafficking
19 Hotline, including specific statements that the
20 hotline:



- 1 (A) May be reached by calling a telephone number, to
- 2 be printed on the placard, or by sending a text
- 3 message to a number, to be printed on the
- 4 placard, to access help and services;
- 5 (B) Is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days
- 6 a week, every day of the year;
- 7 (C) Can provide help, referral to services, training,
- 8 and general information in more than two hundred
- 9 languages;
- 10 (D) Is operated by a nonprofit, non-governmental
- 11 organization; and
- 12 (E) Will ensure that all communications with the
- 13 hotline are anonymous and confidential.

14 (c) No later than January 1, 2026, the department of human
 15 services shall develop a model placard that complies with the
 16 requirements of this section and shall make the model placard
 17 available for download on the department's website."

18 SECTION 3. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
 19 amended by adding a new section to part III to be appropriately
 20 designated and to read as follows:



1 "§302A- Sex trafficking prevention and response
2 training. (a) The department shall provide training for
3 teachers, educational officers, and school-based behavioral
4 health specialists on the dynamics of sex trafficking and
5 strategies for prevention and response, including:
6 (1) Methods used by sex traffickers to lure children into
7 sex trafficking;
8 (2) Ways to identify victims of sex trafficking;
9 (3) Effects of sex trafficking on victims' social, mental,
10 and physical health;
11 (4) Impacts of sex trafficking on children of different
12 racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and
13 gender identities;
14 (5) Strategies to assist in the prevention of child sex
15 trafficking;
16 (6) Trauma-informed strategies for responding to victims
17 of sex trafficking;
18 (7) Informational resources for victims of sex
19 trafficking;
20 (8) Information on victim service providers that provide
21 services to students who have been identified as



1 victims of sex trafficking or who are at risk of
2 victimization; and

3 (9) Information on the importance of obtaining
4 enthusiastic consent, in the context of dating and
5 intimate relationships, with respect to preventing sex
6 trafficking and other forms of sexual violence.

7 (b) At the beginning of each school year, the department
8 shall provide teachers, educational officers, and school-based
9 behavioral health specialists with explanatory information on
10 department-approved protocols for providing services to
11 identified victims of sex trafficking.

12 (c) The department may coordinate and contract with any
13 state or county department or agency, victim service provider,
14 or any other expert in the field of sex trafficking prevention
15 and response to carry out its duties under this section.

16 (d) As used in this section, "victim service provider"
17 means any non-governmental organization that provides direct
18 intervention, including social, medical, mental health,
19 behavioral health, legal, case management, educational,
20 emergency, or housing services to victims of sex trafficking."



1 SECTION 4. (a) The department of the attorney general
2 shall develop and implement a series of public education and
3 outreach events on the dynamics of sex trafficking and the
4 importance of community involvement in sex trafficking
5 prevention and response efforts. The events shall be held in
6 the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, Maui, and the city and county of
7 Honolulu, and may include town hall-style events and the
8 staffing of informational booths or tables at existing
9 community-based events. The department shall disseminate
10 information on:

- 11 (1) Vulnerable populations and risk factors for sex
12 trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation,
13 including community-level risk factors and
14 society-level risk factors;
- 15 (2) Specific locations in each county where confirmed sex
16 trafficking has occurred;
- 17 (3) Laws that criminalize sex trafficking, including
18 penalties faced by convicted sex traffickers;
- 19 (4) Methods used by sex traffickers to lure victims into
20 sex trafficking;
- 21 (5) Ways to identify victims of sex trafficking;



- 1 (6) Effects of sex trafficking on a victim's social,
- 2 mental, and physical health;
- 3 (7) Adverse impacts of sex trafficking on victims'
- 4 families and on communities in which sex trafficking
- 5 occurs;
- 6 (8) Actions that community members can take to support sex
- 7 trafficking prevention and response efforts;
- 8 (9) Resources for victims of sex trafficking, including
- 9 the availability of services for victims; and
- 10 (10) State and national hotlines for victims and witnesses
- 11 of sex trafficking.
- 12 (b) The department of the attorney general may coordinate
- 13 and contract with any state or county department of agency,
- 14 victim service provider, or any other expert in the field of sex
- 15 trafficking prevention and response to carry out its duties
- 16 under this Act.
- 17 (c) As used in this Act, "victim service provider" means
- 18 any non-governmental organization that provides direct
- 19 intervention, including social, medical, mental health,
- 20 behavioral health, legal, case management, educational,
- 21 emergency, or housing services to victims of sex trafficking.



1 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
 2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
 3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
 4 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
 5 2026-2027 for developing and implementing the public education
 6 and outreach events required by section 4 of this Act.

7 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
 8 of the attorney general for the purposes of this Act.

9 SECTION 6. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

11

INTRODUCED BY: *Kanani Ison*

JAN 17 2025



H.B. NO. 609

Report Title:

DOE; DHS; AG; Commercial Sexual Exploitation; Sex Trafficking; Prevention and Response; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the posting of informational placards on sex trafficking and resources available to victims, in public buildings and at other specified locations. Requires the Department of Human Services to develop and make available a model placard. Requires the Department of Education to train teachers, school administrators, and other school personnel on the dynamics of sex trafficking and strategies for prevention and response. Requires and appropriates moneys for the Department of the Attorney General to develop and implement public education and outreach events on the dynamics of sex trafficking and the importance of community involvement in prevention and response efforts.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

