87R14479 ADM-D

By:  Thierry, Leach, Moody, Shaheen, Sanford, H.B. No. 162

     et al.

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a prohibition on prosecuting or referring to juvenile court certain persons for certain conduct constituting the offense of prostitution, to the provision of services to those persons, and to the prosecution of related criminal offenses.

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

SECTION 1.  This Act may be cited as the Child Sex Trafficking Victims Protections and Provisions Act.

SECTION 2.  Section 51.03, Family Code, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (d) and (d-1) to read as follows:

(b)  Conduct indicating a need for supervision is:

(1)  subject to Subsection (f), conduct, other than a traffic offense, that violates:

(A)  the penal laws of this state of the grade of misdemeanor that are punishable by fine only; or

(B)  the penal ordinances of any political subdivision of this state;

(2)  the voluntary absence of a child from the child's home without the consent of the child's parent or guardian for a substantial length of time or without intent to return;

(3)  conduct prohibited by city ordinance or by state law involving the inhalation of the fumes or vapors of paint and other protective coatings or glue and other adhesives and the volatile chemicals itemized in Section 485.001, Health and Safety Code;

(4)  an act that violates a school district's previously communicated written standards of student conduct for which the child has been expelled under Section 37.007(c), Education Code;

(5)  notwithstanding Subsection (a)(1), conduct described by Section 43.02(b) [~~43.02(a) or (b)~~], Penal Code; or

(6)  notwithstanding Subsection (a)(1), conduct that violates Section 43.261, Penal Code.

(d)  Notwithstanding Subsection (a)(1), conduct that violates Section 43.02(a), Penal Code, is not delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision. A child may not be referred to the juvenile court for conduct that violates Section 43.02(a), Penal Code.

(d-1)  A law enforcement officer who suspects that a child may be a victim of an offense under Chapter 20A, Penal Code, or may have engaged in conduct that violates Section 43.02(a), Penal Code, shall take possession of the child in accordance with Section 262.104. The officer shall, as soon as possible, transfer possession of the child to the Department of Family and Protective Services. The Department of Family and Protective Services shall, on taking possession of the child, contact a local service provider or care coordinator who will, in consultation with the child sex trafficking prevention unit established under Section 772.0062, Government Code, and the governor's program for victims of child sex trafficking established under Section 772.0063, Government Code, facilitate the assignment of a caseworker for the child to create a customized package of services to fit the child's immediate and long-term rehabilitation and treatment needs, including medical, psychiatric, psychological, safety, and housing needs.

SECTION 3.  Chapter 20A, Penal Code, is amended by adding Section 20A.05 to read as follows:

Sec. 20A.05.  DEFENSE EXCLUDED. It is not a defense to prosecution under this chapter that the person trafficked by the actor was forced to engage in conduct:

(1)  prohibited by Section 43.02(a); and

(2)  for which the person may not be prosecuted as provided by Section 43.02(b-1).

SECTION 4.  Section 43.02, Penal Code, is amended by adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

(b-1)  A person may not be prosecuted for an offense under Subsection (a) that the person committed when younger than 17 years of age.

SECTION 5.  Subchapter A, Chapter 43, Penal Code, is amended by adding Section 43.07 to read as follows:

Sec. 43.07.  DEFENSE EXCLUDED. It is not a defense to prosecution under Section 43.03, 43.031, 43.04, 43.041, or 43.05 that the person who engaged in conduct prohibited by Section 43.02(a) may not be prosecuted for that conduct as provided by Section 43.02(b-1).

SECTION 6.  This Act applies only to an offense committed or conduct that occurs on or after the effective date of this Act. An offense committed or conduct that occurs before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the offense was committed or the conduct occurred, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose. For the purposes of this section, an offense was committed or conduct occurred before the effective date of this Act if any element of the offense or conduct occurred before that date.

SECTION 7.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.