

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HB 3721

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LICENSING & ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

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Hearing Date: March 31, 2021 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

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Alexcia Wilkerson

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Dallas, TX

My name is Alexcia Wilkerson and im a highschool student in your region . Today i am writing this letter for the bill HB 3721 by Ellzey , I am supporting this bill because I feel it's important because there is a lot of high risk today in this word and it is actually becoming worse .

Chara McMichael, Executive Director

BCFS Health and Human Services, Human Trafficking Interdiction Division

San Antonio, TX

My name is Chara McMichael and this testimonial serves as my statement of support for H.B. 3721 by Rep. Jake Ellzey. I serve as Executive Director of the Human Trafficking Interdiction Division of BCFS Health and Human Services. My division operates the largest advocacy program for Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY), with several hundred survivors ranging in age from five to 22-years of age, operating across 58 counties in the State of Texas. Additionally, we are the lead Victim-Service Provider in the South Texas Officers and Prosecutors (STOP) Task Force based out of San Antonio and serve as a partner with the San Antonio Police Department in the Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking.

H.B. 3721 by Rep. Jake Ellzey will give the Texas Department of Public Safety the opportunity to utilize their unique internal algorithms and analysts to link tips and build intelligence, potentially yielding more effective investigations and prosecution of traffickers. Law enforcement often have competing jurisdictions and utilize differing database systems. The inability to share information easily or quickly on a case can present unintentional problems, particularly with a frequently mobile population like trafficking survivors. Including the only statewide law enforcement agency as a referral point for trafficking tips, information and calls for help has the potential to be a valuable resource in multidisciplinary sting operations, as well as in highlighting areas of greater activity. That information in turn can help better direct service providers like my organization for placement, outreach, and resource provision.

Texas has an incredible network of service providers and law enforcement entities at every level who passionately and knowledgeably make a difference in the lives of human trafficking survivors every day. Texas also has dedicated prosecutors who fight to ensure predators receive the penalties they deserve. Adding a statewide entity like Texas DPS provides a chance for better statewide data collection, information sharing, collaboration, and resource delegation.

I appreciate your consideration and support of this worthwhile legislation. Thank you.