

Senate Judiciary Committee

Pete Mulvey 271-4063

SB 262-FN, relative to the penalty for trafficking in persons under 18 years of age.

Hearing Date: February 20, 2025

Time Opened: 1:43 p.m.

Time Closed: 1:48 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gannon, Abbas, Altschiller and Reardon

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Carson

Bill Analysis: This bill increases the penalty for certain offenses involving the trafficking of persons under 18 years of age to 18 years to life imprisonment.

Sponsors:

Sen. Sullivan

Sen. Pearl

Sen. Murphy

Rep. Noble

Rep. Mazur

Rep. Prudhomme-O'Brien

Rep. Cordelli

Who supports the bill: 9 individuals signed in support. Contact Pete Mulvey for further detail (peter.mulvey@gc.nh.gov).

Who opposes the bill: Daniel Richardson.

Who is neutral on the bill: N/A

Summary of testimony:

Senator Victoria Sullivan

Senate District 18

- The current sentencing minimums for trafficking minors in New Hampshire statute was significantly lower than the federal minimum of 15 years.
- SB 262 increased the state minimum penalty from 7 years to 18 years – symbolic for each year of childhood taken from victims by traffickers.
- SB 262 also provided a life sentence as the maximum penalty.
- Sen. Sullivan found harsher penalties for traffickers and child predators imperative.

Pamela Keilig

Public Policy Specialist – New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (NHCADSV)

- The NHCADSV served as the umbrella organization for the State’s twelve community-based crisis centers, providing free and confidential services for over 15,000 survivors in the State.
- Ms. Keilig spoke in support of SB 262-FN.
- Comprehensive policy, namely victim protections and harsh penalties demonstrably deterred trafficking.
- The house of representatives was contemplating measures targeting illicit massage parlors – a particularly unique and local vector for trafficking following efforts from other states.
- Trafficking has been identified in every county and involved those as young as three years of age, and even the elderly.
- The exploitation from trafficking included but was not limited to forced agricultural labor and forced prostitution.
- The majority of identified cases involved sex trafficking.
- In 2023, 11% of the Coalition’s trafficking clients were children.
- 91 reports were submitted to the Division for Children Youth and Families in 2022 pertaining to child trafficking.

PM

Date Hearing Report completed: February 27, 2025