

# Proposed Florida Safe Harbor Act

## **HB 99 by Rep. Fresen/Nuñez & SB 202 by Sen. Flores**

The commercial sexual exploitation of children and sexual human trafficking of children is an increasing pandemic in this country. The *Florida Safe Harbor Act* will allow first responders the **option** of treating commercially sexually exploited children as child-victims by dropping them off at private treatment centers, or Safe Harbors, if one is available, to treat these children and offer them a brighter future.

- This bill amends the definition of sexual exploitation to include children who are induced into prostitution by no fault of their own. The Act also allows police the discretion of arresting the child-victim or delivering them directly to a Safe House, if one is available, and to provide for the sheltering of sexually exploited children in specifically designated short and long term staff-secure Safe Houses.
- New provisions would be added to Chapter 409 defining short and long-term Safe Houses for child-victims of commercial sexual exploitation and sexual trafficking. Such provisions would define Safe Houses as gender specific secure residential facilities with 24 hour awake staff. The contracting agency must have the expertise to deliver a number of specifically delineated services for sexually exploited children including security, counseling, infant care, life skills to transition back to the community and health care.
- The proposed legislation would **increase civil penalties** for individuals (pimps) who procure others to commit prostitution, and amend section 985.115 to allow victim compensation for commercially sexually exploited children. Finally, the Act establishes a rebuttable presumption that child-victims of commercial sexual exploitation, who commit a first offense of prostitution, be placed in dependency rather than delinquency.
- The Florida Safe Harbor Act **DOES NOT** de-criminalize prostitution or make any substantive changes to the prostitution statutes, except to increase penalties for pimps who traffic in the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

**For more information or with questions, feel free to contact either:**

**Nelson Diaz**

**305-490-3414**

**Trudy Novicki**

**786-360-9485**

## Call to Action on the Florida Safe Harbor Act

On this Thursday, January 19 at 2:45 Fl Senate Bill 202 “sexual exploitation” (The Florida Safe Harbor Act) is in front of the Senate Budget subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice Appropriations.

Please call and/or e-mail the committee members listed below to express your support for the bill.

More information on the bill is attached.

Senator Mike Fasano (Chair) 850- 487-5062 [fasano.mike.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:fasano.mike.web@flsenate.gov)

Senator Arthenia Joyner(vice-chair) 850 487-5059 [joyner.arthenia.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:joyner.arthenia.web@flsenate.gov)

Senator Mike Bennett 850 487 5058 [bennett.mike.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:bennett.mike.web@flsenate.gov)

Senator Greg Evers 850 487-5000 [evers.greg.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:evers.greg.web@flsenate.gov)

Senator Chris Smith 850 487-5112 [smith.chris.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:smith.chris.web@flsenate.gov)

Senator Ronda Storms 850 487-5072 [storms.ronda.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:storms.ronda.web@flsenate.gov)

Senator John Thrasher 850 487-5368 [thrasher.john.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:thrasher.john.web@flsenate.gov)