NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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House Gives Final Passage to Bill Cracking Down on Those Who Pay for Sex with Minors

HB 2714 creates crime of patronizing a prostitute, increases fines, eliminates ignorance of age as defense

SALEM – The Oregon House today gave final passage to HB 2714, the first bill in a package championed by Representative Carolyn Tomei (D-Milwaukie) to crack down on the sex trafficking of children. The House unanimously concurred to Senate amendments to the measure.

"Victims of sex trafficking should be treated like victims, and those who purchase sex with minors should be treated like the criminals they are," said Rep. Tomei. "This bill makes important changes to make sure Oregon law conforms to that philosophy."

HB 2714 separates in statute the crime of soliciting prostitution from the crime of offering prostitution, and increases fines for purchasing sex from children: $10,000 for the first offense, $20,000 the second time, and for third and subsequent offenses, $20,000 plus 30 days in jail. The Senate amendment adds a mandatory seven day jail stay for second offenses. The bill also states that ignorance of age cannot be used as a defense.

Other bills intended to combat the sex trafficking of children include:

- A bill, SB 425, which makes it easier for law enforcement to prosecute pimps, those traffickers who control these youngsters;
- A bill, SB 428, which works to educate law enforcement about the problems associated with these children, helping law enforcement to recognize these kids as victims, not criminals, and direct them to appropriate shelter and treatment; and
- A bill, SB 426, which seeks grants to develop the specialized shelter and treatment that these young victims need.

HB 2714 now moves to the Governor's desk for his signature.

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