

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 11, 2022

Contact:

Austin Arceneaux - 512-463-0117

Austin.Arceneaux@Senate.Texas.Gov



Senator Joan Huffman

Senate District 17

Senator Joan Huffman's Statement on Allegations of Sex Trafficking at a State-Contracted Facility for Sex Trafficking Survivors

AUSTIN- Late yesterday, I became aware of the shocking and heinous reports of abuse that allegedly occurred at a state-contracted facility that houses young female victims of sex trafficking. As someone who has worked for over a decade to pass anti-human trafficking legislation, I am beyond livid.

Last session, the Legislature appropriated \$67.6 million for human trafficking prevention, prosecution, and victims services. Further, Texas has invested billions of dollars into our child welfare system with the primary goal of protecting children -- more than doubling state funding over the last ten years. As Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, I plan to turn over every stone to ensure that taxpayer dollars dedicated to protect our most vulnerable children are being utilized appropriately.

To think of the horrors these survivors had to endure while under the “care” of adults that were entrusted to protect them breaks my heart. I am also dismayed by the fact that it took too long for appropriate action to be taken. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that trafficking victims assistance remains paramount in the legislature.

If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, you can receive confidential help by calling the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's 24/7 toll-free support line at 800-656-4673 or visiting its [online hotline](#).

(Senator Joan Huffman represents District 17, which includes portions of Brazoria, Fort Bend, and Harris Counties. Huffman currently serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, Chair of the Senate Committee on Jurisprudence, Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice, and as a senior member of the Senate Committee on Administration, and the Legislative Budget Board. Huffman and her family reside in Houston.)

###

Follow Senator Huffman on Twitter: @joanhuffman. Find her on Facebook: Senator Joan Huffman.