



Senator Joan Huffman

Senate District 17

Senator Joan Huffman Files Senate Bill 1527 to Combat Human Trafficking and Support Victims

AUSTIN — Today, Senator Joan Huffman filed Senate Bill 1527 to further the state’s efforts to end human trafficking in Texas. The bill is a culmination of months of input from law enforcement, survivors, and advocates, and contains legislative recommendations from the Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force.

“Unfortunately, human trafficking is still occurring across our state,” Huffman said. “Once again I am working with Representative Senfronia Thompson to pass another comprehensive human trafficking bill, which seeks to increase our investigative and prosecutorial tools and further protections for victims, with the goal of turning the tide in the fight against human traffickers. It is imperative that we continue to utilize every mechanism at our disposal to save lives and severely punish those who are convicted of this form of modern-day slavery.”

To increase the investigative and prosecutorial tools, Senate Bill 1527:

- Adds child grooming protections, which will enable law enforcement to prevent harm to potential child victims by giving them the authority to arrest a human trafficker before a child is harmed.
- Increases penalties for traffickers that use excessive force.
- Enhances child pornography sentences when multiple images are possessed or promoted, which will give prosecutors more tools to enhance the criminal penalties for traffickers.

To further protect victims, Senate Bill 1527:

- Flags driver licenses of individuals convicted of human trafficking. This information is vital for police investigating extraneous offenses to be alert to signs of trafficking during a traffic stop or other interaction.
- Allows extraneous conduct and relationship circumstances for human trafficking prosecutions to be presented in a trial of a trafficker, thereby providing prosecutors with more avenues to explain the relationship and history of traffickers.
- Adds protections for victims of trafficking with significant disabilities by eliminating the need to prove force, fraud, or coercion. These additions would protect adults with disabilities who are especially vulnerable to trafficking, especially those with disabilities that affect their ability to assess safety or care for themselves without assistance.

(Senator Joan Huffman represents District 17, which is comprised of Colorado, Jackson, Matagorda, and Wharton County and portions of Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Harris, and Waller County. Huffman currently serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Redistricting, as a senior member of the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and the Legislative Budget Board.)

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