



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF KERN

CIVIC CENTER JUSTICE BUILDING
1215 TRUXTUN AVENUE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93301
(661) 868-2340, FAX: (661) 868-2700

ANDREA S. KOHLER
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JOSEPH A. KINZEL
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

CYNTHIA J. ZIMMER
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

April 6, 2022

MEDIA ADVISORY

CONTACT:
DDA Joseph Kinzel
(661) 868-1131

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Approved by JAK
Press Release #22-22

Re: Senate Bill 1042: Human Trafficking Bill: Senate Public Safety Committee Declines To Allow Legislation To Move Forward

Bakersfield –District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced today that on April 5, 2022, the California State Senate’s Public Safety Committee declined to move forward on Senate Bill 1042, bipartisan bill that was sponsored by the Kern County District Attorney’s Office and sought to amend the Penal Code to treat Human Trafficking crimes as “serious” and “violent” offenses, making them eligible for three-strikes sentencing, reduced custody-credit earning for convicted offenders, and more stringent parole considerations.

The bipartisan bill was introduced by Senator Shannon Grove (R) in cooperation with Senator Anna Caballero (D), and included 21 additional co-authors from the State Senate and Assembly, including Senator Melissa Hurtado. The bill received upwards of 3,000 petition signatures, more than 50 letters in support of the bill, and at yesterday’s hearing there were 22 persons present at the hearing that registered their personal support, including District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer as the bill’s sponsor, as well as representatives of several law enforcement and victim’s rights groups and an additional 62 call-in comments of support from members of the public and organizations across the state.

The hearing included testimony from Human Trafficking survivors that detailed the harms caused by Human Trafficking. The bill received the support of the vice-chair of the committee, Senator Ochoa Bogh, who also was listed as a co-author of the bill. In order to advance in the legislative process, the bill needed to receive three ‘yes’ votes from the five-member Senate Public Safety Committee. With two committee members declining to register a vote on the bill [Senators Bradford and Skinner], the final vote was one “yes” vote [Senator Bogh] and two “no” votes [Senators Kamlager and Wiener].

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer, who attended the hearing and registered her support as the sponsor of the proposed legislation, commented on the outcome: “It is important that legislators are kept aware of the real-world consequences of policy choices on crime. The law’s current classification of Human Trafficking as a ‘non-serious’ and ‘non-violent’ crime enables traffickers to escape additional penalties for repeat offenses and entitles them to the benefits of early parole and increased custody credits that are

afforded to felons whose crimes are considered ‘non-violent’ under the law. Despite bipartisan support to close this loophole that benefits human traffickers, the Senate Public Safety Committee declined to allow the legislation to move forward. This will not be the last time the issue is brought before the legislature, and each time it comes, it arrives with more support than before as awareness of the true tolls of human trafficking increases throughout the state.”

Though a motion was granted for reconsideration of the vote, such reconsiderations are seldom successful, and for practical purposes it appears the bill will not be moving forward during the current legislative session.

Sacramento Press Conference Re: Senate Bill 1042, April 5, 2022

