



END HUMAN TRAFFICKING.
PROMOTE HEALTH & SAFETY.

www.DecriminalizeSex.Work

April 22, 2025

RE: Support for House Bill 5878

To the House Committee on State Government & Elections,

We would like to express our support of H5878, legislation that exempts law enforcement records from public disclosure to protect victims of human trafficking and exploitation. Decriminalize Sex Work is a national organization pursuing a state-by-state strategy to advance legislation protecting the rights, health, and safety of victims of human trafficking and adult consensual sex workers and in the United States.

Drawing on our experiences working directly with survivors of trafficking within the criminal justice system, we know that protecting victims' privacy and anonymity is critical to their safety and wellbeing. When identifying information about victims becomes publicly available, their abusers can use that information against them to continue their control and exploitation. As such we see the need to ensure that those records are not deemed public.

It is important to note that these laws intended to protect privacy must never be used to shield information that victims *do* want to be public; nor to shield law enforcement activity that must be accessible to the public in the interest of transparency and safety. We also want to be clear that these protections should never be used as a justification for criminalizing victims under the guise of rescuing them due to the many adverse consequences of an arrest, even where there are available affirmative defenses and/or there is no conviction.

We support the protection of privacy for victims of trafficking and exploitation and thus support House Bill 5878, and we urge you to continue creating pragmatic and thoughtful policy to address the safety of victims.