

SUBJECT:	Increasing penalty for human trafficking conducted at certain locations
COMMITTEE:	Criminal Jurisprudence — favorable, without amendment
VOTE:	9 ayes — Moody, Cook, Bhojani, Bowers, Darby, Harrison, Leach, C. Morales, Schatzline 0 nays
WITNESSES:	For — Mary Wells, Breaking the Chains of Human Trafficking; Jacquelyn Aluotto, Courtney Litvak, Bridgette Salyer, No Trafficking Zone; Ebony Noir, No Sex Trafficking Zone; James B Rice, Texas Counter-Trafficking Initiative; Larry Hill (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i> : M Paige Williams, Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot; James Parnell, Dallas Police Association; David Batton, Harris County Deputies Organization FOP 39; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers' Union; John Wilkerson, Texas Municipal Police Association; AJ Louderback, Texas Sheriffs' Regional Alliance; Eve Margolis; Roxy D Hall Williamson) Against — None
BACKGROUND:	Concerns have been raised that current law relating to the trafficking of persons may not provide sufficient penalties for offenses against children involved in the child protective system, who may be more vulnerable to trafficking.
DIGEST:	HB 3554 would increase the criminal penalty for the offense of trafficking of persons from a second-degree felony (two to 20 years in prison and an optional fine of up to \$10,000) to a first-degree felony punishable by imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for life or for a term between 25 and 99 years if the offense was committed on the premises of or within 1,000 feet of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a shelter or facility operating as a residential treatment center that served runaway youth, foster children, people who are homeless, or

persons subjected to human trafficking, domestic violence, or sexual assault;

- a community center offering youth services or programs; or
- a child-care facility.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023, and would apply only to an offense committed on or after that date.