



March 2025

PATH EDUCATION

SEXTORTION BILL SIGNED INTO LAW ON MARCH 20, 2025

PATH is grateful to be a member of the Kentucky Sextortion Coalition and so pleased to see our part in advocating for the passage of Senate Bill (SB)73 during the recent 2025 session in Frankfort get results! PATH thanks Senator Julie Raque Adams (R) for sponsoring this legislation and working to move it through the legislative process. PATH worked to get this bill filed again (after no movement in the previous 2024 session) alongside a great team of partners and advocates in the coalition who work to protect Kentucky's young people from this devastating crime. Senate Bill (SB)73 passed both houses of the legislature unanimously and was signed into law on March 20, 2025 by Gov. Andy Beshear. See below press release for more information:

FRANKFORT, KY (March 20, 2025)— Senate Bill (SB) 73, a comprehensive measure aimed at combating sexual extortion and protecting Kentucky's most vulnerable residents, has officially been signed into law. Sponsored by Sen. Julie Raque Adams, R-Louisville, the legislation establishes clear criminal penalties for perpetrators and strengthens legal protections for victims. "This is a critical step in protecting children and vulnerable individuals from one of the fastest-growing crimes in our country," Adams said. "SB 73 sends a clear message: those who use threats and coercion to exploit others will be held accountable under Kentucky law."

Sexual extortion, often called "sextortion," is a form of exploitation where perpetrators use threats—such as releasing sensitive images—to force victims into sexual acts, create explicit content, or provide money or valuables. **SB 73 makes sexual extortion a felony offense when the perpetrator possesses compromising material and threatens to use it against a victim. If no material exists but threats are still made, the offense is classified as a misdemeanor.**

The legislation also provides tougher penalties in cases where

- the perpetrator has a prior sexual offense conviction,
- the perpetrator holds a position of authority or trust over the victim,
- a deadly weapon is used or threatened, and
- the victim is a minor, suffers serious injury, or attempts suicide as a result of the crime.

An amendment focused on clarifying these provisions to ensure that the

language of the law is clear and effective, while maintaining the full intent of the bill and avoiding unintended consequences.

In addition to criminal penalties, SB 73 creates civil remedies to allow victims and their families to seek damages. The law also mandates education and awareness initiatives in Kentucky schools and colleges to help prevent sexual extortion and ensure students and parents know where to turn for help.

“We can’t undo the damage these crimes cause, but we can make sure victims have support and hold offenders fully accountable,” Adams added. “I’m proud to see this bill become law, and I’m grateful to my colleagues and the Governor for standing with victims of this horrific crime.”

For more information on SB 73 and the 2025 Kentucky General Assembly, visit www.kylegislature.gov

Thanks to all who called their legislators and helped get this bill passed and into law to protect Kentucky's youth.

PATH IN THE FIELD

On Saturday March 22, Dr. Theresa Hayden, Vice Chair and Consultants, Jaime Thompson and Josh Bowling presented at the Fighting for Freedom event held in Alexandria, KY.

The presentation, titled “Human Trafficking in Today’s World: Empowering Communities to Take Action” was designed as a 40-minute presentation for attendees to choose to attend throughout the conference breakout sessions. PATH welcomed 15 participants to our education session facilitated by Theresa, Jaime, and Josh.

The following Objectives helped guide the presentation and discussion portion of the presentation.

Objective 1: Participants will be able to Identify all the players involved in trafficking in persons and gain or enhance understanding about the dynamics of human trafficking.

Objective 2: Participants will be introduced to, and gain knowledge about, best practices when working with people who are identified as victims/survivors of human trafficking.

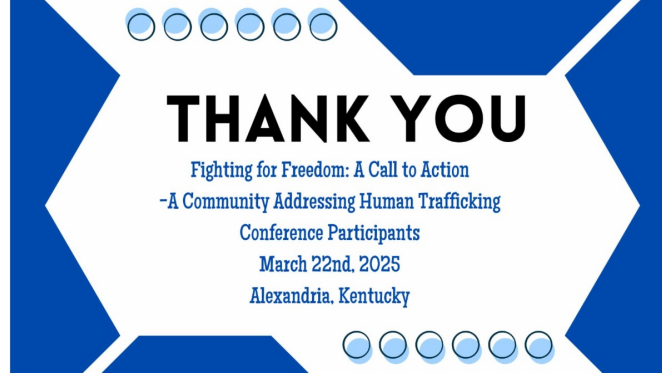
Objective 3: Participants will be introduced to laws and history of anti-trafficking advocacy work related to resources and services for trafficked persons in Kentucky and the United States.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN TODAY’S WORLD: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO TAKE ACTION

*Actions and Advocacy
Group Questions and Sharing*





Last month we announced PATH is now a partner with Kentucky Youth Advocates FACE IT movement. On Thursday March 26, Jaime Thompson, MSSW (Program Coordinator at PATH) attended the FACE IT - Full Partner Spring meeting. This event is a great opportunity for all the partners of this movement to get together and share what they are doing to protect and support Kentucky youth. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month so watch this newsletter and PATH's Facebook page for more information.

PATH IN THE BOARDROOM

The PATH Board is a dedicated group of talented women committed to PATH's mission of educating, informing, and empowering ourselves and others in understanding human trafficking and promoting and advocating social justice efforts toward its end. With March being National Women's Month, we are grateful and thankful for our board of directors and their leadership.



Front: Jaime Thompson, Sr Jacquie Aceto, Back: Kim Becker, Dr. Theresa Hayden, Sr Carol Curtis, Dr. Patricia Bautista-Cervera, Dr. Deb Young, Sr Maryann Tarquinio, Sr Barbara Sullivan. Not pictured: Amanda Chapman and Stephanie Perry-LeBlanc.



The PATH Board would also like to thank Dr. Debra Young, EdD, EdS, MSSW for her service to the Board. Her 3 year term has come to an end and we wish her well as she devotes more time to her academic practice and new responsibilities.

PATH AND YOU



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