

Amended Action Alert!

Yesterday in the Senate Rules committee, Senator Lauren Book pulled [SB 1044](#), the bill she had sponsored to allow human trafficking victims to sue "facilitators", as well as traffickers. Facilitators would include hotels and motels where the victims had been trafficked -- and where staff closed their eyes and did nothing. The bill would also have allowed hotels to use training of their staff on how to recognize and report trafficking as an affirmative defense against such suits.

This Senate bill, along with its House companion **HB167** had passed all the other assigned committees unanimously. Human trafficking survivors, advocates and prosecutors came repeatedly to Tallahassee to testify to the unspeakable crimes that have been occurring in the state's hotels and motels. Some of the hearings were wrenching.

So what happened?. How did the bill get killed? Read the following article, if you want to know.: <http://miamiherald.typepad.com/nakedpolitics/2018/03/human-trafficking-bill-near-death-after-senator-chooses-to-postpone-her-own-bill.html>

This is absolutely outrageous. The corporations did not have the courage to come into the open and state their opposition (and their fear that they would be sued). We should not remain silent about the injustice of allowing the trafficking to continue in hotels and motels throughout the state. We need to let Senator Book know her actions to pull the bill are unacceptable and the community that fights human trafficking will not forget what she has done.

We should **flood calls into Senator Book's office**: [\(850\) 487-5032](tel:(850)487-5032)

Tell her that:

- you are concerned about human trafficking because you work on combating it, you hold a position with a coalition ,etc. (i.e. identify yourself)
- it was unconscionable for her to pull **SB1044** the good bill she had sponsored from its final committee hearing
- Speaker Corcoran in the House said he supported the bill's passage so it could have become law
- The anti-human trafficking community across the state will not forget that she turned her back on all the victims and survivors who were brave enough to travel to Tallahassee and testify
- So now, because of Senator Book's lack of courage in continuing to fight for the bill, human trafficking will continue in hotels, without even any obligation for the hotels to train their staff and require them to report obvious trafficking cases.

Also call: **Senator Benacquisto**, Chair of the Senate Rules Committee; [\(850\) 487-5027](tel:(850)487-5027) and ask her to

- schedule another meeting of the Rules committee to hear **SB 1044**, which was temporarily postponed (TP'd) at the meeting this week.
- this bill passed the other Senate committee unanimously, after trafficking victims and survivors came to Tallahassee to bravely testify on the bill
- you owe it to these victims to schedule another meeting of the Rules committee this week and to allow Senators to vote on it.

Please send this Action alert to others.

Best,
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