

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGING, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, LEGISLATIVE AND
MILITARY AFFAIRS
MEETING JOINTLY

Monday, May 16, 2022
1:00 PM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators David Wallace, Chair; and Cecile Bledsoe; Representatives Charlene Fite, Chair; Sonia Eubanks Barker, Vice Chair; Mary Bentley, Mark Berry, Craig Christiansen, Joe Cloud, Cindy Crawford, Tony Furman, Denise Garner, Ashley Hudson, Rick McClure, Jon Milligan, and Joy Springer

Other members present: Senators Linda Chesterfield, Trent Garner, Kim Hammer, Mark Johnson, and Larry Teague; Representatives Stan Berry, Karilyn Brown, Frances Cavanaugh, Denise Ennett, Kenneth Ferguson, Jimmy Gazaway, Fredrick J. Love, Aaron Pilkington, David Ray, Johnny Rye, Jamie Scott, Nelda Speaks, DeAnn Vaught, and Carlton Wing

Representative Fite called the meeting to order.

Approval of the Minutes for the April 5, 2022, Meeting [Exhibit B]

Representative Cloud made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Senator Bledsoe, and the motion carried.

Presentation from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) pertaining to Human Trafficking [Exhibits C1-C2]

Staca Shehan, Vice President, Analytical Division, NCMEC; gave a presentation on the work that NCMEC does. She discussed an overview of the statistics regarding child sex trafficking, the processes of identifying child sex trafficking, the role of NCMEC, and resources for the return and recovery of child sex trafficking victims.

Presentation from Partners Against Trafficking Humans (PATH) pertaining to Human Trafficking [Exhibit D]

Grace Fundaro, Community Education Director, PATH; gave a presentation about the organization. She discussed what PATH is, how they operate, their core focus, and the goals of the organization.

Presentation from Into the Light pertaining to Human Trafficking [Exhibit F]

Gretchen Smeltzer, Executive Director, Into the Light; Beth Kratochvil, Program Director and Lead Trainer, Into the Light; and Mieka Pratt, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Advocate, Into the Light; gave a presentation on the role that their organization plays in fighting child sex trafficking in Arkansas. Ms. Kratochvil discussed the focus of the organization and shared specific stories of victims that their organization has helped. Ms. Smeltzer discussed the founding of Into the Light, how their organization intervenes in cases of child sex trafficking, and their methodology for victim support.

Presentation from Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC) pertaining to Human Trafficking [Exhibit E]

Brad Cazort, Director, ACIC; gave a presentation of the statistics of trafficking crimes in Arkansas. He discussed the numbers of arrests, convictions, and dismissals of counts regarding human trafficking.

Lindsey Wallace, Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary, Department of Corrections; discussed specifics related to sentencing and parole of sexual trafficking perpetrators depending on whether the victims is a minor.

Arkansas Department of Corrections (DOC), Board of Corrections, Review of Rule: Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction Transfers and Confidential Juvenile Records

Lindsey Wallace, Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary, DOC; discussed the proposed rule which addresses Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction transfers and the confidentiality of juvenile records.

Representative Fite stated that, without objection, the rule stands as reviewed.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m.