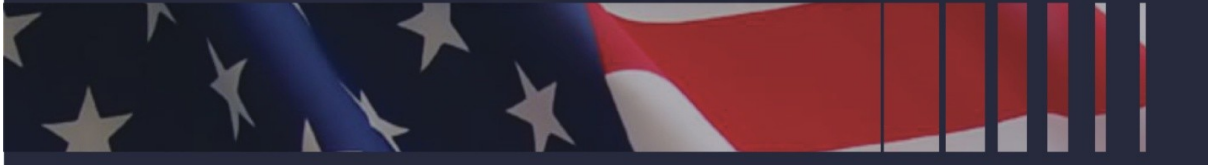


PROTECTED INNOCENCE INITIATIVE

STATE ACTION. NATIONAL CHANGE.



District of Columbia Facts

Criminalization of DMST

1. Following federal precedent, D.C. has a separate law for the sex trafficking of children and clearly defines a minor under the age of 18 used in a commercial sex act as a sex trafficking victim without regard to use of force, fraud or coercion.

Criminal Provisions Addressing Demand

2. District of Columbia Attorney General Irvin Nathan was one of 51 Attorneys General who signed a letter to Backpage.com calling on the company to disclose its efforts to identify and delete advertisements that facilitate sex trafficking, specifically of minors.¹
3. In D.C. soliciting prostitution carries a maximum penalty of 90 days for the first conviction; however, if charged with pandering a buyer could face up to 20 years in prison, making identification of the minor victim critical for appropriate punishment of the buyer.

Criminal Provisions for Traffickers

4. Penalties for traffickers are comparable to federal trafficking penalties, punishable by up to 20 years in prison or a fine up to \$20,000.
5. In July 2011, Cooper Kweme, a former security guard at Westfield Wheaton Mall in Maryland, pleaded guilty to federal charges of sex trafficking a 16-year-old girl. Kweme was operating a prostitution business based in D.C. through which he trafficked the minor for commercial sex acts. Many cases in D.C. are charged at the federal level.²

Protective Provisions for Child Victims

6. Courtney's House, a D.C. area service provider, conducts street outreach and direct victim services for youth prostituted in D.C.
7. There is no shelter where rescued victims of domestic minor sex trafficking can be placed for specialized treatment and care, leaving many trafficking minors to be placed in detention under prostitution related charges in direct conflict with their status as a victim

¹ <http://www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral/cases/backpage/backpageletter.pdf>

² <http://washingtonexaminer.com/blogs/capital-land/2011/07/mall-security-guard-admits-prostituting-teen>.