

Response to Bill 251 submission:

The Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) is one of only two police services in the province who currently have a specific human trafficking mandate and program for at-risk youth. Our Human Trafficking Unit's (HTU) work over the past few years has certainly identified a need for more progressive and expansive legislation to combat the exploitation of youth. The hotel and short-term rental industry can play an important role in reducing child sex trafficking and aiding law enforcement with identifying persons responsible for the victimization. The DRPS is supportive of the enactment of the tabled Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy Act and the replacement of the Hotel Registration of Guests Act with the more modern and robust Accommodation Sector Registration of Guests Act. We are also in agreement with the suggested amendments to the Child, Youth and Family Services Act and Prevention and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act.

Not only will these legislative changes help curb underage exploitation but also better protect and rehabilitate victims who meet the new age criteria (16 and 17 years of age). After carefully reviewing the legislative submission, we believe the following points should be considered:

- The DRPS would like to see the number of hours a person can stay at a treatment home increased from 12 hours to 24 hours. This will allow an adequate “cooling off” period for the victim and have the victim effectively access and review the vast network of support services and resources available to them (sec. 77.1 (1) – CYFSA)
- It is recommended that short-term housing rentals (eg. AirBnB) be included in the Accommodation Sector Registration of Guests Act. Our HTU investigators have identified short-term rental sites as a conduit for sex trafficking.
- Finally, under the enforcement section detailing “Inspectors” for the purpose of the Act, Peace Officers should be considered Inspectors in relation to Sec. 7 of the Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy Act.

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