

Fast-tracked NY law weakens Protections for Sex Trafficked and Abused Minors

Would allowed treatment for STDS for minors of any age without parental knowledge or consent

ALBANY, NEW YORK, USA, May 19, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Fast-tracked NY law weakens Protections for Sex Trafficked and Abused Minors



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Rita Palma, parents rights advocate

A fast-tracked bill in the New York State Senate weakens protections for sex-trafficked and sexually-abused minors according to parents' groups. Senate Bill S3899a authored by Sen. Liz Krueger (D-Upper Eastside) "provides treatment for sexually transmitted diseases to minors without a parent's or guardian's consent," according to the official description.

Critics assert the bill undermines mandated reporter laws that require licensed professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse or sex trafficking. "What reasonable person wouldn't suspect that something extremely wrong

is going on if a nine-year old requests treatment for a sexually-transmitted disease, but didn't want her parents to know about it." Said Rita Palma of the parent's rights group My Kids My Choice. "At a time when we are making strides against sex trafficking and increasing protections for sexually-abused minors this bill is taking us in exactly the wrong direction."

The bill had been dormant for ten years but was recently rushed through the New York Senate Health Committee without a hearing and only two business days notice before a vote on May 14 that approved it on a straight party line vote with 10 Democrats in favor and five Republicans opposed. Aye votes were cast by Senators Gustavo Rivera of the Bronx, Brad Hoylman of Manhattan, Todd Kaminsky of Nassau, Jen Metzger of Ulster, Toby Ann Stavisky of Flushing, Brian Benjamin of Harlem, Alessandra Biaggi of the Bronx, Julia Salazar of Bushwick, Velmanette Montgomery of Brooklyn, and David Carlucci of Rockland.

An identical bill authored by Assemblymember Amy Paulin (D-Scarsdale) has not moved this session in the Assembly.

Among other things the bill allows for preventive measures, such as hepatitis b immunizations for children of any age, and immunizations for human papilloma virus for children as young as nine-years old. "It is ridiculous to believe that a child nine, or even younger, knows enough about his or her own medical history to safely consent to these procedures", said Michael Smith, a parents' rights advocate. Parents groups are also critical of the lack of protections for children with intellectual disabilities, and the absence of a prohibition on offering children experimental procedures or products. How the treatments would be paid for by children remains murky.

As of Friday morning, the bill was on the agenda for the May 21 Senate Finance Committee, chaired by the bill's author Sen. Krueger, but was dropped later in the day without explanation.

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