Research exercise: Ohio Laws to Combat Human Trafficking: Somewhat Flawed Despite Significant Strides Made

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State Law and Human Trafficking: Prosecuting Slavery in Ohio
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Recent Legislation:
Ohio Senate Bill 235
-Signed into effect by Gov. Strickland Dec. 2010
-Defines HT to include both labor and sex trafficking
-Made HT a stand-alone second degree felony
-Amends criminal charge of conspiracy to include HT

Weaknesses: Sen. Seitz’s amendments; Protection of “Johns”; Redundant provision

Ohio House Bill 262
-Importuning applies to “reckless disregard”
-Procuring is a felony if victim’s under 18 (lack of knowledge is indefensible)

Obstacles: Funding, ignorance and sympathy for the demand side

INCLUDES VICTIM-CENTERED PROVISIONS

Putting It in Perspective:
-By conservative estimates, 1,861 Ohioans are believed to be trafficked in the state today
-At least 6,316 are at risk
-Toledo is fourth leading city in the nation in terms of number of arrests, investigations and rescue of domestic minor sex trafficking victims of U.S. cities.

-Due in large part to Ohio’s Midwestern locale and intersection of I-75 and I-80
-83% of U.S. sex trafficking victims are U.S. citizens

Prior Law: The HT Specification
-Included no actual HT offense
-”Human Trafficking Specification” must be proven—additional 18 to months to 10 years
-Must prove two felonies pertaining to HT, add specification and prove all elements therein.
SPECIFICATION HAS NEVER BEEN PROSECUTED