



**Office of the District Attorney
Alameda County**

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alcodea.org

February 25, 2022

Senator Shannon Grove
16th District
1021 O Street, Room 7150
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1042

Dear Senator Grove:

I am writing to declare my strong support for the passage of SB 1042, a bill that would include human trafficking within the definition of a violent felony and the definition of a serious felony for all purposes, including for purposes of the Three Strikes Law. Defining the crime of Human Trafficking as both a violent and serious felony crime is long overdue.

I have personally been in the forefront of sponsoring legislation that addresses the crime of Human Trafficking, beginning in the 2004-05 legislative cycle. In 2005, I introduced an Initiative called H.E.A.T. (Human Exploitation And Trafficking) from which my Office created the first Specialized Prosecution Unit and H.E.A.T. Watch, a 5-pronged Strategy for communities to build a response to the insidious crime of Human Trafficking. Assistant District Attorney Sharmin Bock, who currently is the Team Leader of the H.E.A.T. Unit and I were front and center in the Proposition 35 campaign that more clearly and honestly defined the crime of Human Trafficking.

My Office has prosecuted more than 800 Human Sex Trafficking cases, a majority of which have involved minor female victims. We currently have more than 75 Human Sex Trafficking cases pending. Our work is not just prosecution; through H.E.A.T. Watch, we have trained hundreds to thousands of communities across America about Human Trafficking, and particularly the vulnerabilities of those falling under the power and control of a trafficker as well as strategies for supporting victims in the aftermath of being trafficked, including their healing journey, which is extremely complicated based on their victimization. Through the H.E.A.T. Institute, which I created, we have worked to find root causes of human trafficking and effective ways to identify, deliver appropriate and effective responses and support for the victims, and other significant steps to stop Human Trafficking from occurring in the first place.

I share this history to emphasize that I, and my Office, are fully entrenched in combatting Human Trafficking. We have seen the impact of trafficking on the victims. We have seen victims murdered, physically abused, psychologically

terrorized, manipulated and coerced and left to deal with the tragic aftermath on being sex trafficked. We have also seen women and men fall victims to Human Labor Trafficking, serving more than 150 victims of labor trafficking. In every trafficking situation, those victims who are freed from the bondage and power of the trafficker, are nevertheless left to deal with the psychological and physical manifestations of being trafficked, of being victims of modern day slavery.

I applaud you, Senator Grove, for bringing this legislation forward. In every sense of the definition and word, the crime of Human Trafficking is as serious as any other crime defined as a Serious Felony under California law. Likewise, this insidious, damaging, prolific crime is violent in every sense of the word. This is even more so when the trafficking involves minors, or vulnerable individuals who are prey for traffickers.

I urge your Legislature to pass SB 1042 out of Public Safety Committees in both Houses, to pass off the floor of the Senate and Assembly and send the bill to Governor Newsom's desk for signature. The time has come to fully recognize Human Trafficking as both violent and serious under California Law.

If I can be of assistance to you in these efforts, please do not hesitate to contact me, or Assistant Sharmin Bock.

Sincerely,



Nancy E. O'Malley
District Attorney