



Senator Bruce Starr

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Bill to combat sex trafficking passes Senate

Salem, OR — Senate Bill 898, which will fight sex trafficking in Oregon by establishing another watchdog over strip clubs, passed the State Senate on a unanimous vote Thursday.

“We must do more to protect underage girls who are preyed upon by the sex trafficking trade,” said Senator Bruce Starr (R-Hillsboro), who introduced the legislation. “This bill gives us another tool to identify women who are under-aged, working in strip clubs and at high-risk to be pulled into the illegal sex trade.”

Senate Bill 898 authorizes the Oregon Liquor Control Commission to request proof that an individual working at a strip club meets the minimum age requirements. This provides another set of eyes to identify underage workers and individuals who might be targets of sex traffickers. If an individual cannot provide proof that they are over 21, the OLCC can order them to stop working. The OLCC can also cite an employer for allowing an underage individual to work in a strip club.

“Places like strip clubs are prime grounds for recruiting and hiding sex trafficking victims,” said Starr. “We want a watchdog that can look out for suspicious activity like the hiring of underage dancers. These red flags can help smoke out sex trafficking rings.”

The bill now goes to the House of Representatives for approval.

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