



BETSY CLOSE
OREGON STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 8

**Thank you Chair Prozanski and members of the Committee.
Sponsored by myself and Senator Betsy Johnson I am
Senator Betsy Close with Testimony In Favor of SB 673**

Every year, over 100,000 children are trafficked for sex in the United States, and, on average, these children are first exploited at age thirteen. Human trafficking is a \$9.8 billion industry in this country, and it is happening here in Oregon.

Thirteen year olds should have a chance to be kids; to have dreams and aspirations; to play soccer or go to the mall. No child should have to suffer through the horrors of sex trafficking exploitation.

We would prefer to think something this terrible couldn't happen in our state. But if we ignore this problem, we become complicit in it. It is our responsibility to act in the defense of these victims.

SB 673 is a bipartisan bill that strengthens the penalties for trafficking children and closes the legal loopholes that earned Oregon a "D" grade from Shared Hope International on our response to sex trafficking.

Our children deserve the strongest legal protection that we can provide. We need to send an unmistakable message that kids are not for sale in Oregon.