

CONCERNED
WOMEN *for* AMERICA
LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE

February 15, 2024
House State, Civic, Military, and Veterans Affairs
Testimony in Support of HB24-1092

Chairman Steven Woodrow, and members of the Committee, I am Dr. Karen Pennington, State Director for Concerned Women for America (CWA) of Colorado. We are the largest grassroots, ~500,000 strong, public policy women's organization in the country. I am a nurse and educator and today, I am testifying for Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee in support of HB24-1092.

Some background: the issue of child sex trafficking and prostitution has seen explosive growth in our country from \$500 million to \$150 billion per year. The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation cites that a child is bought or sold for sex every two minutes – every day in this country¹. This issue is modern-day slavery – and a new abolitionist movement. We cannot ignore or look the other way any longer. A society is judged on how well it cares for its women and the most vulnerable – its children. The need for this bill reflects how poorly we care by currently having no mandatory sentencing. The victim has a **mandatory life-long sentence** of multiple traumas, PTSD, and mental and behavioral difficulties². I ask you, why would we NOT want to pass this bill to protect our children? It is the greatest fear of parents and grandparents that justice **would not** be served to the perpetrators of this crime. Consequences for criminal actions do result in a reduction of crime. National Institute of Justice indicates -the chance of being caught is the most effective deterrent to reducing crime³.

Enforcement of existing Class 2 and Class 3 felony laws to include mandatory court sentencing of **at least** the minimum term must be imposed for these crimes against children.

Concerned Women for America of Colorado urges you to:

- Acknowledge the extent of this egregious harm by enforcement of mandatory term sentences
- Protect our children

Vote “YES” on HB24-1092

Thank You.

¹ <https://concernedwomen.org/uncovering-the-epstein-trafficking-ring-with-special-guest-sen-marsha-blackburn/>

² <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.dml.regis.edu/doi/full/10.1111/fcre.12742>

³ <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/five-things-about-deterrence>