

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 11

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 379: SURVIVOR SUPPORT AND DEMAND
REDUCTION ACT (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

OVERVIEW

In 2022, Senate Bill 357 decriminalized loitering for the purpose of engaging in prostitution. The effect of this decriminalization has left communities, law enforcement, and vulnerable youth-particularly 16- and 17-year-old victims of trafficking-without critical protections. Despite being legally defined as minors, the lack of clear statutory language left uncertainty over whether these individuals could be treated as victims of trafficking under the law.

In response, Assembly Bill 379 (AB 379), authored by Assemblymember Maggie Krell, would ensure that those who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation are treated with dignity and care while reaffirming law enforcement's ability to investigate, deter, and penalize those who fuel demand for exploitation. AB 379 explicitly reaffirms that any individual under the age of 18-including 16- and 17-year-olds-who is engaged in commercial sex is a victim, not a criminal. It mandates that these minors be referred to diversion programs and offered appropriate support, rather than being processed through the criminal justice system. This change resolves the confusion created by SB 357 and restores the ability of law enforcement and service providers to assist exploited youth.

AB 379 also strengthens enforcement against those who perpetuate the demand for commercial sex. It increases penalties for individuals who knowingly solicit or engage in sex with minors and establishes a new misdemeanor offense for loitering with intent to purchase sex.

The bill also creates the Survivor Support Fund, directing State revenue from offender fines to community-based organizations that serve trafficking survivors. These funds will expand outreach, trauma-informed services, and recovery programs.

Today's action recommends the Board of Supervisors adopt a position of support for AB 379 which would restore necessary legal tools, reinforce protections for minors, and strengthen the state's response to commercial sexual exploitation.

RECOMMENDATION

SUPERVISOR JIM DESMOND

Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to express the County's support for Assembly Bill 379, consistent with Board Policy M-2.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Assembly Bill 379 advances equitable access to protection and support for minors involved in commercial sexual exploitation by ensuring consistent treatment of all individuals under 18 as victims, including 16- and 17-year-olds. AB 379 supports a system that prioritizes safety, recovery, and long-term stability for individuals disproportionately affected by trafficking and exploitation. AB 379 has the support of District Attorney Summer Stephan. AB 379 has also garnered significant community support, including the People's Association of Justice Advocates.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Assembly Bill 379 advances the County's sustainability goals by improving public health, safety, and social well-being. It diverts minors from the justice system into care, supporting better long-term outcomes. The Survivor Support Fund promotes economic and social sustainability by funding survivor-led organizations that provide trauma-informed services and strengthen community resilience.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ACTION:

Noting for the record that this item was heard on April 23, 2025; ON MOTION of Supervisor Desmond, seconded by Supervisor Montgomery Steppe, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Administrative Officer to express the County's support for Assembly Bill 379, consistent with Board Policy M-2, except as to Section 4 of the Bill (creating proposed Penal Code Section 653.25); and to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to advocate for the state legislature to redraft its language such that the elements of the offense are defined with clarity and specificity as to the proscribed conduct.

AYES: Lawson-Remer, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond

NOT PRESENT: Anderson

ABSENT: (District 1 Seat Vacant)

State of California)

County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



Signed

by Andrew Potter

