

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2026**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 19

SUBJECT: PROTECTING VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING BY REPEALING STATE SENATE BILL 357 (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

In 2023, State Senate Bill 357 (SB 357), authored by Senator Scott Wiener, went into effect, repealing California Penal Code Section 653.22, which prohibited loitering with the intent to engage in prostitution. The stated intent of SB 357 was to reduce profiling and prevent discrimination. However, the law has had severe unintended consequences that have created a haven for human traffickers, hindered law enforcement’s ability to intervene, and enabled the ongoing exploitation of vulnerable individuals, including minors, on public streets.

Across the state, local jurisdictions and law enforcement agencies have reported a rise in visible street prostitution, open exploitation, and human trafficking in the wake of the implementation of SB 357. Without this enforcement mechanism, law enforcement officers now lack the ability to intervene in suspected trafficking cases unless a more serious criminal offense has already taken place. This has significantly limited early intervention opportunities and allowed trafficking networks to operate more freely in public spaces, often without fear of consequence.

Particularly in urban corridors of California, children and adults are being trafficked in broad daylight with virtually no legal recourse for law enforcement to intervene. In many of these cases, the lack of proactive enforcement tools has resulted in missed opportunities to identify and support victims before they are further harmed. The inability to act preemptively has not only endangered those being exploited but has also contributed to deteriorating safety conditions, increased public concern, and strained the resources of local jurisdictions attempting to respond through non-criminal avenues.

Today’s action directs the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to include in the County’s Legislative Program direction to seek a change in State law to reinstate Penal Code Section 653.22 that would restore law enforcement’s ability to act on visible signs of trafficking and coercion, and to help disrupt exploitation before it escalates further.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

SUPERVISOR JIM DESMOND

Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to add a legislative proposal to the County’s Legislative Program Sponsorship Proposals section, consistent with Board Policy M-1, that would seek a change in State law to reinstate Penal Code Section 653.22 or similar statutory authority prohibiting loitering with the intent to engage in prostitution.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

SB 357 was enacted with the goal of reducing profiling; however, it has disproportionately harmed the very populations it intended to protect. Survivors’ advocates and law enforcement agencies have observed that the removal of loitering laws has allowed traffickers to act with impunity, particularly

targeting vulnerable women and girls. Repealing SB 357 would restore a critical intervention point for law enforcement and social service providers to interrupt cycles of exploitation and offer victims a pathway to safety and services.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Repealing SB 357 aligns with the County’s Sustainability Goals by promoting public health and safety, social well-being, and equitable access to services. Street-level trafficking and exploitation result in physical and psychological harm, increase strain on emergency services, and contribute to unsafe community environments. Empowering law enforcement and outreach providers to intervene proactively supports long-term health and safety outcomes, particularly in underserved neighborhoods disproportionately affected by trafficking and criminal exploitation.

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:

A motion was made by Supervisor Desmond, for the Board of Supervisors to take action as recommended.

(Motion failed for lack of a second.)

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