

Tennessee Receives “A” For Strength Of Human Sex Trafficking Laws

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NASHVILLE- Tennessee received an “A” from Shared Hope International’s 2013 state report card released yesterday with a score of 93.5, the highest of any other state rated in the Protected Innocence Challenge. In 2012, Tennessee was given a “C” on its state report card and showed significant improvement after bills cracking down on child sex trafficking were passed during the last legislative session.

Tennessee received the highest score of any state in the country with 93.5 considered an “A.” Other states also receiving an “A” included Washington and Louisiana. Tennessee received a “C” in 2011 and 2012 with scores of 73 and 79.5 respectively. During the 2013 legislative session, the Tennessee General Assembly passed 12 new laws amending chapters 39 and 40 within the Tennessee Code Annotated including:

1. Removes as a defense ignorance or mistake of fact concerning the age of a minor to the offenses of patronizing prostitution and soliciting sexual exploitation of a minor;
2. Adds the purchase of another person as an act of human trafficking;
3. Promoting prostitution of a minor rises to a Class A or B felony (from a class E)
4. Allows some victims 13 and under to testify outside the courtroom by CCTV;
5. Establishes a Human Trafficking Task Force.

“This was a statewide collaborative effort between non-profits, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and members of the General Assembly. One of the broader groups, but also were able to attain the very most,” said Linda Smith, founder of Shared Hope International at yesterday’s press conference in Washington D.C.