

Support HB 1063

Removes Criminal Statute of Limitations for Sex Crimes Against Children

Status: Senate Criminal Law Committee

Sponsors: Representative Jefferson (D-67); Senators Collins (D-16), Hunter (D-3)

What Does the Bill Do?

HB 1063 removes the criminal statute of limitations for any sex offense when the victim was under 18 years at the time of the offense.

Why Does the Statute of Limitations Need to be Changed?

Most child victims are not ready to report the abuse to law enforcement until after the criminal statute of limitations has expired.

- Most child victims are abused by family members or family acquaintances.
- Offenders often use coercion/guilt tactics to prevent the reporting of abuse.
- Some of the effects of sexual abuse do not become apparent until the victim is an adult and a major life event, such as marriage or birth of a child, takes place.
- This law would protect other children from victimization by giving prosecutors a better chance to prosecute and convict sex offenders.

Other States Have Eliminated Their Criminal Statutes of Limitation:

- 33 states and the Territory of Guam have already eliminated their criminal statutes of limitation for at least some sex crimes. www.sol-reform.com.

Prosecutorial Issues

- Evidence of sexual assault may still exist many years after the crime occurred.
- Just because some cases would be difficult to prosecute does not mean that all victims should be denied a practical remedy.
- Prosecutors retain full discretion to decide whether to charge an older case.

Supporting Organizations:

- Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA), Lyn Schollett, (217) 753-4117
- Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation
- Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois
- Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP)
- Chicago Children's Advocacy Center