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Bill Would Clear Criminal Records of Human Trafficking Victims



By Mike Hedeem
Monday, October 3, 2016 at 05:07 PM EDT

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ROCHESTER, N.Y. -- New proposed legislation would clear criminal records of people who are the victims of human trafficking. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand was on Monday in

Rochester with more details about her bill, which is receiving bipartisan support, to wipe clean the records of those who commit non-violent crimes as a direct result of human trafficking.

At the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Gillibrand was flanked by members of local law enforcement, advocacy groups and human trafficking survivors.

Gillibrand says many times, trafficked people, including children, are forced into a life of crime by their captors. Under this legislation, Gillibrand says victims who've been arrested for crimes will be able to work with local police and prosecutors to get a clean slate and move on with their lives.

"For a lot of these young men and women, they desperately need it because it's affecting their ability to get loans, to get a college education, to get housing, employment, anything that the need it becomes an impediment," said Gillibrand, D-New York.

Trafficking survivors says they'd like to see the legislation go even further so those who advocate for victims, and those who turn traffickers in, are kept safe.

"I also think that it's very, very important that we have protection for the persons that advocate for persons who are vulnerable," said Jennifer Wolfley, a human trafficking survivor. "We all know there is a price to pay in whistleblowing. We all know there is a price to pay in advocacy."

Gillibrand's legislation is supported by the Rochester Police Department along with the Monroe County Sheriff's and District Attorney's Offices, who stated the bill is compassionate and a stand for common sense.

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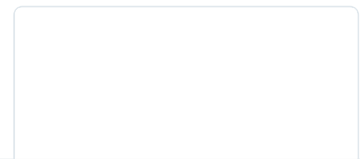
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