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The Silent Epidemic: Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking in California is really a very hard issue to handle; even though many things are said about the border policies and economics, the real focus should be on support and rehabilitation to bring this huge change substantially. Continuous reduction of this serious breach of human rights by the governments and nongovernmental organizations should be put forward. The Southwest border under the Biden administration is too porous, which many say allows for the room for cartels and other crime groups to conduct their operations—primarily human smuggling and trafficking. Further, a Polaris report in 2021 noted that migration puts immigrants at an incredibly higher risk of being trafficked. The US State Department says, "less than half of one percent of human trafficking victims were identified worldwide," proof that reduction of this crime has been hard to come by.

Over the period covered up to 2022, convictions of human trafficking in the United States have gone down by 48%. This can be contributed to by none other than non-secure borders that most of these criminals can slip through without the government being able to prosecute them. The lawlessness of the Southwestern border under the Biden administration encourages crime organizations to facilitate human smuggling and trafficking. Laxity in border controls decreases the ability to trace and arrest traffickers as they take advantage of the porous border to escape police dragnets. Traffickers will normally use grooming as a way to befriend possible victims. The victims, on the other hand, do not know what is going on and eventually end up being easily

manipulated and subdued. Grooming mainly involves building an emotional relationship with the child over time, progressively detaching the child from the normal support systems and making them solely dependent on the trafficker. Grooming is progressive and may take days or, in other times, even months. This poses a challenge to law enforcement officers or agencies in picking it up at an early stage before it had already caused damage.

California has a very high number of immigrants who are added to a highly skewed economic situation; the state is thereby put at risk of sex trafficking. The vast and varied landscape of the state provides enough hideouts and escape routes from the laws for the traffickers. There is more business for the traffic agents in urban cities where the demand for these illegal services is very high. Many groups and governmental organizations are working to control sex trafficking in California. They have tried several measures to contain it, including awareness programs, more support services for the victims, and strengthening the forces combating it. For example, better collaboration between federal and local agencies is encouraged to make surveillance even more effective and hit harder on trafficking networks.

Sex trafficking in California is a problem whose solution is multi-faceted, much like the picture of any other state where it occurs. Though border policies and economic aspects could not be ruled out in importance, for any serious difference to be made, a focus has to be given to victim support and rehabilitation, as well as heavy persecution of caught traffickers. Lenient criminal laws will only encourage traffickers to expand their illegal measures. More concrete action steps need to be included, bringing all the stakeholders from the government and nongovernmental organizations to bring this serious human rights violation to an end.

References

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