

SUBJECT: Allowing criminal asset forfeiture funds for services to trafficking victims

COMMITTEE: Criminal Jurisprudence — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Collier, Zedler, K. Bell, J. González, P. King, Moody, Murr,
Pacheco

0 nays

1 absent — Hunter

WITNESSES: For — Jessica Anderson, Houston Police Department; (*Registered, but did not testify*): Jason Sabo, Children at Risk; Gus Reyes, Christian Life Commission, Texas Baptists; Frederick Frazier, Dallas Police Association, FOP7 16 and State FOP; Traci Berry, Goodwill Central Texas; Bill Kelly, City of Houston Mayor's Office; Lori Henning, Texas Association of Goodwills; Kyle Ward, Texas PTA)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Code of Criminal Procedure art. 59.06(c) governs the use of the proceeds from property taken by law enforcement because it was used or intended to be used for certain crimes and then forfeited through the civil courts. Law enforcement agencies and prosecutors may share forfeited cash and property if they have an agreement with each other as outlined by the statute. Current law restricts how forfeited property or funds from its sale may be used. In general, law enforcement agencies may use forfeited property only for law enforcement purposes, and prosecutor's offices may use the property only for official purposes of their offices.

Some have noted that victims of human trafficking have long-term needs for services and that proceeds from assets seized from crimes, including human trafficking, could help fund programs to help these victims.

DIGEST: HB 2058 would allow prosecutors and law enforcement agencies to use civil asset forfeiture funds to cover the costs of a contract with a city or

county program to provide services to domestic victims of trafficking.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.