



# Harriss Legislation to Help Human Trafficking Victims Now Law

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GLEN CARBON – On Friday, bipartisan legislation by State Senator Erica Harriss (56<sup>th</sup> -Glen Carbon) and State Representative Jeff Keicher (R-Sycamore) to help victims of human trafficking pursue a normal life after their trauma was signed into law by Governor Pritzker. [House Bill 2418](#) creates a pathway to expunge criminal records for victims of human trafficking as they seek to recover from the trauma they have experienced; human trafficking victims are often forced to participate in unlawful activity by their traffickers.



“The signing of this bill now creates a pathway to expunge criminal records for victim survivors of human trafficking as they seek to recover from the trauma they have experienced and seek to pursue a better life,” said Senator Erica Harriss (R-Glen Carbon). “It’s incredibly important we do more in our state to further protect victims, especially those who have experienced the unimaginable.”

“It is so crucial we assist people who have survived human trafficking in returning to a normal, happy life after their trauma, especially when they face penalties for crimes they were forced to commit,” said Keicher. “By creating this pathway to expungement, we can help human trafficking victims through their healing process and move toward a life where they are recognized with the human dignity they deserve.”

HB2418 allows victims of human trafficking to petition for vacation, expungement or immediate sealing of their sentence. It also allows the victim making the petition to attend hearings remotely to avoid undue hardship or create a risk of harm. The bill also allows the petition to be filed under seal if a public filing may expose the victim to future harm. These steps help ensure a victim is able to avoid future victimization from their former abuser or abusers.

HB 2418 passed the House of Representatives in March then was sent to the Senate and passed in May. This legislation passed both chambers unanimously. Rep. Keicher is the House Republican Spokesperson for the Immigration & Human Rights Committee.