
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Jesse Arreguin, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 1239 **Hearing Date:** July 1, 2025
Author: Dixon
Version: June 19, 2025
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: CA

Subject: *Human trafficking: data*

HISTORY

Source: 3Strands Global

Prior Legislation: AB 2524 (Irwin), Ch. 418, Stats. of 2016
SB 259 (Nielsen), Ch. 245, Stats. of 2020

Support: 3strands Global Foundation (Co-Sponsor); California Police Chiefs Association;
Crime Victims United of California

Opposition: None known

Assembly Floor Vote: 78 - 0

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to require the Department of Justice (DOJ) to include in the information made available on the OpenJustice Web portal information concerning arrests for human trafficking and the number of individuals who have been a victim of human trafficking.

Existing law states any person who deprives or violates the personal liberty of another with the intent to obtain forced labor or services, is guilty of human trafficking and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for 5, 8, or 12 years and a fine of not more \$500,000. (Pen. Code, § 236.1, subd. (a).)

Existing law provides any person who deprives or violates the personal liberty of another with the intent to effect or maintain procurement for sex work, pimping, pandering, procurement of a child for prostitution, abduction of a minor for sex work, sale or production of child sexual assault material (CSAM), sexual exploitation of a child, employment of a minor for CSAM, promotion of CSAM, obscene live conduct, or extortion is guilty of human trafficking and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for 8, 14, or 20 years and a fine of not more than \$500,000. (Pen. Code, § 236.1, subd. (b).)

Existing law states any person who causes, induces, or persuades, or attempts to cause, induce, or persuade, a person who is a minor at the time of commission of the offense to engage in a commercial sex act, with the intent to effect or maintain procurement for sex work, pimping, pandering, procurement of a child for prostitution, abduction of a minor for sex work, sale or

production of CSAM, sexual exploitation of a child, employment of a minor for CSAM, promotion of CSAM, obscene live conduct, or extortion is guilty of human trafficking, punishable in state prison, as follows:

- Five, 8, or 12 years and a fine of not more than \$500,000; or,
- Fifteen years to life and a fine of not more than 500,000 when the offense involves force, fear, fraud, deceit, coercion, violence, duress, menace, or threat of unlawful injury to the victim or to another person. (Pen. Code, § 236.1, subd. (c)(1-2).)

Existing law requires the information published on the DOJ's OpenJustice Web portal contain statistics showing all of the following:

- The amount and the types of offenses known to the public authorities;
- The personal and social characteristics of criminals and delinquents;
- The administrative actions taken by law enforcement, judicial, penal, and correctional agencies or institutions, including those in the juvenile justice system, in dealing with criminals or delinquents;
- The administrative actions taken by law enforcement, prosecutorial, judicial, penal, and correctional agencies or institutions, including those in the juvenile justice system, in dealing with minors who are the subject of a petition or hearing in the juvenile court to transfer their case to the jurisdiction of an adult criminal court or whose cases are directly filed or otherwise initiated in an adult criminal court; and,
- The total number of each of the following:
 - Civilian complaints received by law enforcement agencies;
 - Civilian complaints alleging criminal conduct of either a felony or a misdemeanor;
 - Civilian complaints alleging racial or identity profiling, These statistics shall be disaggregated by the specific type of racial or identity profiling alleged, including, but not limited to, based on a consideration of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability. (Pen. Code, §§ 13010, subd. (g), 13012, subd. (a)(1-5)(A).)

Existing law requires the DOJ to publish an annual report containing statewide statistical information pertaining to crime, as specified. (Pen. Code § 13010.)

Existing law requires the annual report published by the DOJ, as specified, commencing with the report that includes data from 2022, to the extent the data is available, include statistics on lewd or lascivious felonies consistent with those reported for rape, including the number of offenses reported and the rate per 100,000 population. (Pen. Code, 13012.7, subd. (a).)

This bill requires the OpenJustice Web portal to include information concerning arrests for human trafficking and the number of individuals who have been a victim of human trafficking.

COMMENTS

1. Need for This Bill

According to the author:

Human trafficking has no place here or anywhere in our State. The state must take every step to help victims and their families overcome the devastation of human trafficking and partnering with organizations to raise awareness and bring an end to the inhumanity. Even one victim of human trafficking is one too many.

Despite the positive steps taken by the legislature to tackle human trafficking and provide services to victims of human trafficking, there is currently a significant lack of data on human trafficking within California. The most recent DOJ report on human trafficking was released in 2012. Furthermore, the most recent DOJ Criminal Statistics Reporting Requirements report does not include any reporting requirements for human trafficking or the victims, and the annual Crime in California report by the DOJ has no information on human trafficking.

To address these issues, and to align the reporting of human trafficking with other crimes, AB 1239 would require that data on arrests for human trafficking and the number of individuals who have been a victim of human trafficking be made available on the DOJ's OpenJustice Web portal.

2. Current DOJ Information on Human Trafficking

DOJ currently provides information about human trafficking, including national rates of trafficking. Human trafficking includes both labor trafficking and trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. The existing DOJ website on human trafficking discusses the California law on trafficking and explains the different types of trafficking covered by both state and federal law. According to the DOJ website on human trafficking:

The United States is widely regarded as a destination country for human trafficking. Federal reports have estimated that 14,500 to 17,500 victims are trafficked into the United States annually. This does not include the number of victims who are trafficked within the United States each year. According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, 10,949 cases of human trafficking were reported in the United States in 2018. According to the hotline, California is one of the largest sites of human trafficking in the United States. In 2018, 1,656 cases of human trafficking were reported in California. Of those cases, 1,226 were sex trafficking cases, 151 were labor trafficking cases, 110 involved both labor and sex trafficking, and in 169 cases the type of trafficking was not specified....

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(<https://oag.ca.gov/human-trafficking/what-is> [as of June 6, 2025].) According to information provided to this Committee by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), in its 2024 report on Felony Counts for new admissions, there are 359 incarcerated persons currently serving a principal term of human trafficking with 256 incarcerated persons on a subordinate term.

This bill would specifically require data on arrests for human trafficking violations under Penal Code 236.1, and the number of victims of human trafficking. Notably, it does not include convictions. It bears mentioning that reporting the number of victims of a violation of Penal Code 236.1 might be challenging and misleading. For example, not all victims of human trafficking may identify as such, and even if they do, they may not report the crime. This might be a reason that the DOJ report on Domestic Violence Related Calls for Assistance speaks in terms of “calls” instead of number of victims. (<https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/exploration/crime-statistics/domestic-violence-related-calls-assistance> [as if June 23, 2025].)

3. Argument in Support

According to 3Strands Global Foundation, the co-sponsor of this bill:

AB 1239 takes an urgently needed step in strengthening California’s response to human trafficking by requiring the Department of Justice to publicly report data on arrests related to human trafficking and the number of identified victims through its OpenJustice Web portal.

As a direct service provider, we see firsthand how survivors of trafficking are too often rendered invisible due to fragmented data systems and insufficient public reporting. This lack of transparency undermines our collective ability to allocate resources, evaluate impact, and design policies that meet the real needs of survivors across diverse regions and communities.

Accurate, publicly accessible data is not only critical to strengthening the state’s response—it is also essential for empowering local organizations like ours to strategically expand reintegration support and develop targeted prevention programming. When we understand where trafficking is happening, who it is affecting, and how interventions are progressing, we are better equipped to break the cycles of exploitation.

We commend your leadership in introducing AB 1239 and for recognizing that the absence of data is itself a barrier to justice. By aligning human trafficking reporting with standards already in place for crimes such as domestic violence, hate crimes, and homicides, this bill affirms the seriousness of trafficking as a statewide issue and supports survivor-centered policy development.