

Bill	HB 933: Crimes - Human Trafficking of Minor - Defense of Ignorance of Victim's Age
-------------	---

Sponsors	Delegates Lee, Aumann, Bobo, DeBoy, Dumais, Eckardt, Frick, Glass, Glenn, Gutierrez, Guzzone, A. Kelly, Krebs, Luedtke, McComas, McDonough, Morhaim, Pendergrass, S. Robinson, F. Turner, Valderrama, and M. Washington
-----------------	---

The Issue

- Permitting a defense to prosecution based on mistake of age subverts the intention of protecting children from exploitation and creates a weakness in the laws needed to deter this crime and to protect our children.
- State laws prohibiting a defense based on mistake of age in sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) laws send a clear message that this crime will not be tolerated and firmly protects all minors from the danger of commercial sexual exploitation.
- 18 states have similar laws to protect victims of commercial sexual exploitation, including Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Legislative Solution

Expressly prohibit defendants prosecuted under the human trafficking law from asserting a defense that they did not know the age of the minor victim.

How HB 933 Addresses the Issue

- HB 933 prevents a defendant from asserting a defense that the offender did not know the age of the minor victim.
- By eliminating mistake of age as a defense, HB 933 strengthens protections for all minors under the human trafficking law.

