



**NEW HAMPSHIRE NAMED MOST IMPROVED STATE  
IN PASSING LAWS TO FIGHT CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**, New Hampshire earned the title of Most Improved state, for its laws addressing the crime of child sex trafficking, according to an [annual State Report Card](#) released by [Shared Hope International](#) (SHI), the only U.S. NGO working in every state to end child sex trafficking through legal reform. Key legislation passed during the 2016 legislative session increased their grade from a D to a C.

“We are excited to see states, like New Hampshire, take the critical step of recognizing all commercially sexually exploited children as victims of sex trafficking, and protecting them from being charged or prosecuted for the crimes committed against them,” said SHI founder Linda Smith.

SHI started the annual report card—known as the Protected Innocence Challenge—six years ago, in 2011. That year, 26 states got Fs and 15 had Ds. Over the last six years, **New Hampshire**, along with states across the nation, **enacted important laws**:

- This year New Hampshire’s Protected Innocence Challenge grade has gone up from a D to C.
- New Hampshire passed HB 1628 on June 7, 2016, which specifies that buying sex with a child is a crime under the State’s human trafficking law.
- New Hampshire’s trafficking in persons law criminalizes the sex trafficking of minors and does not require that force, fraud or coercion is used when children are the victims.
- Commercially sexually exploited children are identified as sex trafficking victims and are not criminalized for prostitution offenses.

Despite so much progress, SHI found a key gap in New Hampshire law. While minors may not be charged with prostitution, there is no statutory avenue to connect exploited youth with specialized services.

[Shared Hope International](#) is an anti-trafficking organization focusing on prevention, restoration and justice for victims of sex trafficking. Founded in 1998 by Congresswoman Linda Smith, Shared Hope is a trusted leader for training, research, restorative development, and legislative development.

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**MEDIA MATERIALS:**

For media convenience, a variety of resources are available at [www.sharedhope.org/press](http://www.sharedhope.org/press). Video clips, including sex trafficking survivor comments, are available at this location: <https://vimeo.com/user12564384/videos>. Videos are password protected, please enter password sharedmedia1 to access media clips