



## **TENNESSEE'S STRONG LAWS FIGHT CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**, Tennessee is a leader in the nation in passing laws to fight 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. Tennessee is also home to this year's SHI **Pathbreaker Awardee Margie Quinn**, Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) at the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

Shared Hope established the Pathbreaker award to recognize the pioneering efforts of those who broke the trend of inaction and initiated proactive responses to prevent sex trafficking, and this year recognizes the leadership of ASAC Margie Quin. She is a particularly important voice from law enforcement advocating for the importance of removing criminal liability for minors for prostitution.

ASAC Quin has twenty-three years of law enforcement experience including patrol, criminal investigations, high-tech surveillance, drug interdiction, supervision and leadership. In 2010, ASAC Quin led a T.B.I./Vanderbilt team to research and publish the groundbreaking and award winning study, "Tennessee Human Sex Trafficking and its Impact on Children and Youth." This study has paved the way for passage of 43 pieces of legislation in the state of Tennessee since 2011. ASAC Quin also supervises the first-ever statewide Human Trafficking Unit. The newly formed unit has conducted six major undercover operations across the state since 2015. These demand reduction operations, code named, "Someone Like Me," have resulted in the arrest of over 120 men and identified over 30 women, who were provided services at the time of encounter.

"We honor the bold leadership of Margie Quin, and the consistent work Tennessee is doing as a state to pass laws to protect children from trafficking," 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. This year, **Tennessee**, along with states across the nation, **enacted important laws:**

- Tennessee passed SB 2121 on April 27, 2016, which removed statutory barriers to child welfare ~~to~~ intervening on behalf of child sex trafficking victims.
- From 2011 to 2016 Tennessee's Protected Innocence Challenge grade has gone up from a C to an A.
- Tennessee imposes substantial penalties for sex trafficking and provides tools for law enforcement to investigate effectively.
- Tennessee prohibits the criminalization of minors for prostitution.

Despite so much progress, SHI research **found gaps** in these areas of **Tennessee** law:

- Victims may be deterred from pursuing justice due to lack of trial protections and potential barriers to receiving crime victims' compensation.
- Victims may be left vulnerable due to the lack of a statutory avenue to 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.