

SB 1369 (A. Paxton)/HB 2313 (S. Thompson)

Relating to training materials for certain transportation network company drivers regarding human trafficking awareness and prevention.



Scope of the Problem

Transportation Network Company (TNC) drivers are (likely unwittingly) transporting human trafficking victims in the course of their trafficking. Law enforcement has gathered evidence of human trafficking victims (including child victims) being transported by rideshare app. For example, in Montgomery County, a man was arrested in September of 2022 for trafficking and sexual assault of a minor. He groomed that minor, and then used a rideshare app to transport her.¹ In Dallas, a man was sentenced to over ten years for attempting to traffic who he thought was a teenage girl. He planned to transport the girl (actually an undercover officer) to his hotel room by rideshare app.² These stories are but a small representation of the true number of victims that are transported by their traffickers using TNCs.

Policy Recommendations

Transportation Network Companies should provide training and reporting information to their drivers. Drivers could serve as first reporters and work with PDs to provide basic intelligence/information, but they may not recognize the signs of trafficking. In fact, an Uber driver in Elk Grove, California recognized the signs and reported two women who were trafficking a 16-year-old girl. Due to his quick action, police were able to recover the teenage girl from a life of trafficking.³ The driver was able to provide critical information to law enforcement and prevent the young girl from additional victimization.

With improved training, TNC drivers will be able to better recognize the signs of human trafficking and report the trafficking they are observing. These reports would be incredibly beneficial to law enforcement in identifying victims and preventing further harm.

¹ “Bond revoked for 20-year-old accused of sexual assault of minor while out on bond for same act.” Abc 13 Eyewitness News. September 20, 2022. <https://abc13.com/ty-maine-miller-montgomery-county-human-trafficking-wanted-traffickers/12244859/>

² “Man Sentenced to 10+ Years for Attempted Child Sex Trafficking Following Sting.” United States Attorney’s Office Northern District of Texas. July 27, 2022. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-ndtx/pr/man-sentenced-10-years-attempted-child-sex-trafficking-following-sting>

³ <https://abc7news.com/uber-sex-trafficking-elk-grove-bust-child/1677830/>

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