STATE OF NEW YORK

4756

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 14, 2023

Introduced by Sen. LANZA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the criminal procedure law, in relation to vacating convictions for offenses resulting from sex trafficking, labor trafficking and compelling prostitution

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Legislative intent. The purpose of this legislation is to strengthen protection for the victims of sex trafficking, labor trafficking, compelling prostitution and trafficking in persons, who are convicted of a range of offenses as a result of that trafficking or compelling. New York's landmark law offering the vacating of convictions for prostitution-related offenses that were a result of this trafficking has been the model for laws in more than half of the states. However, several states wisely offer this relief to victims who may be compelled to participate in other offenses as well. This legislation would follow that example. Granting relief under this provision has always been based on consideration of the circumstances and the interest of justice; this legislation reiterates that.

§ 2. Paragraph (i) of subdivision 1 of section 440.10 of the criminal procedure law, as amended by chapter 629 of the laws of 2021, is amended to read as follows:

(i) The judgment is a conviction where the defendant's participation in the offense was a result of having been a victim of sex trafficking under section 230.34 of the penal law, sex trafficking of a child under section 230.34-a of the penal law, labor trafficking under section 135.35 of the penal law, aggravated labor trafficking under section 135.37 of the penal law, compelling prostitution under section 230.33 of the penal law, or trafficking in persons under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (United States Code, title 22, chapter 78); provided that

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(i) official documentation of the defendant's status as a victim of sex trafficking, labor trafficking, aggravated labor trafficking, compelling prostitution, or trafficking in persons at the time of the offense from a federal, state or local government agency shall create a presumption that the defendant's participation in the offense was a result of having been a victim of sex trafficking, labor trafficking, aggravated labor trafficking, compelling prostitution or trafficking in persons, but shall not be required for granting a motion under this paragraph;

(ii) a motion under this paragraph, and all pertinent papers and documents, shall be confidential and may not be made available to any person or public or private entity except where specifically authorized by the court; [~~and~~]

(iii) when a motion is filed under this paragraph, the court may, upon the consent of the petitioner and all of the state and local prosecutorial agencies that prosecuted each matter, consolidate into one proceeding a motion to vacate judgments imposed by distinct or multiple criminal courts; **and**

(iv) the granting of a motion under this paragraph shall be determined by the court in consideration of the circumstances and the interest of justice; or

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.