

# California Lawmaker Outraged Over Stalling of Sex Trafficking Laws

A California assemblyman is speaking out after a bill seeking to strengthen human trafficking laws was briefly stalled by his peers, expressing dismay over the entire ordeal.

Assemblyman Tom Lackey told CBN's Faithwire how the Assembly Public Safety Committee initially refused to pass Senate Bill 14—a measure classifying child sex trafficking as a serious felony—before holding an emergency meeting and advancing the measure.

"This is a Senate bill, so it first was voted on on the Senate side, which is not a bastion for conservatism by the way—just the opposite," he said. "It's very hard left thinking."

Initially, Lackey said the bill addressed trafficking more generally, but it was then narrowed down to specifically combat sex trafficking. Labeling this form of trafficking as a "serious felony," he said, is important, as the state has a "three strikes" statute.

"When you have three strikes or three serious felonies, you have life imprisonment," Lackey said. "And so that's why there's such strong consideration to the term 'serious felony,' because it makes you eligible for this type of punishment—a lifetime of punishment."

When the bill came up in the committee, though, all six Democrats refused to support the measure. This shocked some onlookers and became a national story, as the bill passed the Senate unanimously earlier this year.

But amid public dismay, California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a

Democrat, joined Republicans in supporting the measure and it was revived. In a new vote held last Thursday, the measure passed 6-0, though two Democrats didn't vote in that second effort.

Lackey, who voted "yes" during the initial discussion, said the bill "targets people who are non-compliant and committing a very serious offense against society." And he expressed dismay over any opposition to its contents.

"Can you get more egregious than sex trafficking?" he said. "Not just having sex, but sex trafficking a child? What in the world justified standing in the way of such reasonable consideration?"

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