

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE  
2026 Regular Session  
To: Judiciary B  
By: Representative Ford (73rd)

## House Bill 1131

### (As Passed the House)

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 97-29-51, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REVISE THE PENALTY FOR PROCURING PROSTITUTION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

**SECTION 1.** Section 97-29-51, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

97-29-51. (1) (a) A person commits the misdemeanor of procuring the services of a prostitute if the person knowingly or intentionally pays, or offers or agrees to pay, money or other property to another person for having engaged in, or on the understanding that the other person will engage in, sexual

intercourse or sexual conduct with the person or with any other person. "Sexual conduct" includes cunnilingus, fellatio, masturbation of another, anal intercourse or the causing of penetration to any extent and with any object or body part of the genital or anal opening of another.

(b) Upon conviction under this subsection, a person shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \* \* \* One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) or by confinement in the county jail for not more than six (6) months, or both. A second or subsequent violation of this section shall be a felony, punishable by a fine not exceeding \* \* \* Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00), or by imprisonment in the custody of the Department of Corrections for not more than two (2) years, or both. Any person convicted under the provisions of this

paragraph, shall also serve one hundred (100) hours of community service.

(c) However, in all cases, if the person whose services are procured in violation of this subsection (1) is a minor under eighteen (18) years of age, the person convicted shall be guilty of a felony and shall, upon conviction, be punished by imprisonment for not less than five (5) years, nor more than thirty (30) years, or by a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) nor more than Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00), or both.

(d) Consent of a minor is not a defense to prosecution under this subsection (1).

(2) (a) A person commits the felony of promoting prostitution if the person:

(i) Knowingly or intentionally entices, compels, causes, induces, persuades, or encourages by promise, threat, violence, or by

scheme or device, another person to become a prostitute, engage in conduct in violation of Section 97-29-49, regardless of whether the other person can be or is arrested for, charged with or convicted of the offense of prostitution;

(ii) Knowingly or intentionally solicits or offers or agrees to solicit, or receives or gives, or agrees to receive or give any money or thing of value for soliciting, or attempting to solicit, another person for the purpose of prostitution;

(iii) Knowingly induces, persuades, or encourages a person to come into or leave this state for the purpose of prostitution;

(iv) Having control over the use of a place or vehicle, knowingly or intentionally permits another person to use the place or vehicle for prostitution;

(v) Accepts, receives, levies or appropriates money or other property of value from a prostitute, without lawful consideration, with knowledge or reasonable cause to know it was earned, in whole or in part, from prostitution; or

(vi) Conducts, directs, takes, or transports, or offers or agrees to take or transport, or aids or assists in transporting, any person to any vehicle, conveyance, place, structure, or building, or to any other person with knowledge or reasonable cause to know that the purpose of such directing, taking or transporting is prostitution.

(b) Upon conviction, a person shall be punished by a fine not exceeding Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) or by imprisonment in the custody of the Department of Corrections for not more than ten (10) years, or both. A second or subsequent violation shall be punished

by a fine not exceeding Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) or by imprisonment in the custody of the Department of Corrections for up to twenty (20) years, or both.

(c) However, in all cases, if the person whose services are promoted in violation of this subsection (2) is a minor under eighteen (18) years of age, the person convicted shall be guilty of a felony and shall, upon conviction, be punished by imprisonment for not less than five (5) years, nor more than thirty (30) years, or by a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) nor more than Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00), or both. There is no requirement that the defendant have actual knowledge of the age of the person, and consent of a minor is not a defense to prosecution under this section.

(3) If it is determined that a person suspected of or charged with promoting

prostitution is a trafficked person, as defined by Section 97-3-54.4, that fact shall be considered a mitigating factor in any prosecution of that person for prostitution, and the person shall be referred to appropriate resources for assistance. If it is determined that a person suspected of or charged with promoting prostitution is a minor under eighteen (18) years of age who meets the definition of a trafficked person as defined in Section 97-3-54.4, the minor is immune from prosecution for promoting prostitution as a juvenile or adult and provisions of Section 97-3-54.1(4) shall be applicable.

(4) Any partnership, association, corporation or other entity violating any provision of subsection (2) against the promotion of prostitution shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine not exceeding Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00). If the

person whose services are promoted is under eighteen (18) years of age, the partnership, association, corporation or other legal entity convicted shall be punished by a fine not exceeding One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00). There is no requirement that the defendant have knowledge of the age of the person. Consent of a minor is not a defense to prosecution under this section.

(5) Investigation and prosecution of a person, partnership, association, corporation or other entity under this section shall not preclude investigation or prosecution against that person, partnership, association, corporation or other entity for a violation of other applicable criminal laws, including, but not limited to, the Mississippi Human Trafficking Act, Section 97-3-54 et seq.

**SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2026.

