

**Office of Joy Smith, M.P.
Kildonan-St. Paul**



**Bureau de Joy Smith, députée
Kildonan-St. Paul**

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News Release

Human Trafficking Bill Debated in House of Commons

BILL C-310 Supported By MPs From Conservative, NDP, Liberal and Green Parties

Ottawa, ON: Last night, MP Joy Smith's Private Members' Bill C-310 was debated in the first hour of its Second Reading. Bill C-310, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons)*, proposes two important amendments to the Criminal Code.

Bill C-310 will amend the *Criminal Code* to add the current trafficking in persons offences [s.279.01 and s.279.011] to the list of offences which, if committed outside of Canada by a Canadian or permanent resident, could be prosecuted in Canada. The current list of extraterritorial offences includes serious crimes such as child sexual exploitation, hostage taking and terrorism.

The second clause of Bill C-310 amends the definition of exploitation in the trafficking in persons offence to add an evidentiary aid for Courts to consider when they are determining whether a person was exploited.

MP Joy Smith began the hour of debate yesterday by addressing the reality of modern day slavery in Canada. "If you can take a moment and consider that only a few blocks from where we are sitting today in this House, Jamie Byron was forcing underage girls into prostitution. In a downtown Ottawa hotel, a young 17 year old girl trafficked from Windsor ON, was starved until she agreed to be a prostitute. This is nothing short of slavery," stated MP Smith.

Speaking to the applying extraterritorial jurisdiction to trafficking in persons offences, MP Smith said, "As Parliamentarians, we must be resolved to eradicating all forms of this slavery, both in Canada and abroad. An extraterritorial human trafficking offence will ensure justice in cases where the offence was committed in a country without strong anti-human trafficking laws or judicial system and will clearly indicate that Canada will not tolerate its own citizens engaging in human trafficking anywhere."

MP Smith has worked hard to gain support from all parties for Bill C-310. In addition to Members from her own party, Bill C-310 has been jointly seconded by MPs from the NDP, Liberal, and Green parties. During the debate, speakers from each party strongly endorsed the amendments proposed in the Bill.

“I am grateful for the strong support I have received from Members of Parliament in all parties,” said Mrs. Smith. “By supporting Bill C-310, each Member of this House plays an important role to strengthen the tools used by police officers and prosecutors and to secure justice for victims of trafficking both here in Canada and abroad.”

Prior to opening the debate on Bill C-310 yesterday, Mrs. Smith was honoured to receive a Certificate of Commendation from the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women for her ‘continuing advocacy on behalf of women and girls, who have or may be in the future, subjected to human trafficking.’

Bill C-310 is the second Private Members’ Bill that MP Joy Smith has brought forward for debate. In 2009, MP Joy Smith placed third on the Order of Precedence and brought forward Bill C-268. This legislation successfully passed into law in June 2010 creating Canada’s first child trafficking offence with mandatory minimum sentences.

The next hour of debate for Bill C-310 is expected to take place on Tuesday, December 13, 2011 and go to a vote at Second Reading on Wednesday, December 14, 2011. To stay up to date with the progress of Bill C-310, visit www.joysmith.ca.

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To arrange an interview with MP Joy Smith, please contact:

Joel Oosterman
Office of Joy Smith, MP
Tel: (613) 992-7148
Cell: (613) 220-6795
Email: joy.smith.a2@parl.gc.ca

The following organizations have issued their support of Bill C-268.

- International Justice Mission Canada
- Ratanak International
- The Salvation Army
- Walk With Me
- [free-them]
- Sextrade 101
- MAST (Men Against Sex Trafficking)
- LAHT (London Anti-Human Trafficking Committee)

To view their endorsements, please visit:

http://www.joysmith.ca/main.asp?fxoid=FXMenu,9&cat_ID=27&sub_ID=112&sub2_ID=54