



Riverside County District Attorney

# NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release  
Aug. 26, 2014

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## LEGISLATION INITIALLY DRAFTED BY THE RIVERSIDE DA'S OFFICE STREAMLING HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROSECUTIONS IS SIGNED INTO LAW BY GOVERNOR

RIVERSIDE – Legislation initially drafted by the Riverside County District Attorney's Office to streamline human trafficking prosecutions, reduce trauma to trafficking victims, and reduce court costs was recently signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown.

Senate Bill 939 allows prosecutors to file multiple charges against a defendant who commits human trafficking-related crimes in multiple jurisdictions across California and would hold them accountable in a single prosecution. The law eliminates multiple trials in different jurisdictions thus streamlining prosecutions, saving taxpayer dollars, and sparing human trafficking victims the trauma of facing their traffickers in more than one trial. Victims of these types of crimes are often moved by their traffickers across county lines for either labor or commercial sex exploitation.

"Human trafficking is the fastest growing crime in California," Riverside County District Attorney Paul Zellerbach said. "SB 939 will be a tremendous asset to prosecutors statewide and make it easier and more efficient to prosecute these types of cases. At the same time, this new law will also provide human trafficking victims more protections under the law."

SB 939 was signed into law by Gov. Brown on Friday, Aug. 22, 2014, and will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2015. The bill was one of the few bills to pass both houses of the Legislature without a single "no" vote this session.

The idea for such Legislation initially came from Riverside County Supervising Deputy DA Gerald Fineman, who is a member of the Riverside County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (RCAHT). The DA's Office then drafted the initial Legislation and reached out to the office of Sen. Marty Block, D-San Diego, who co-sponsored the bill with the San Diego DA's Office. The DA's Offices in Orange and Alameda counties also supported the bill.

"Human trafficking is among the most despicable and odious of crimes because traffickers treat victims as property to be used and sold," Block said. "Winning the human trafficking war is a priority for me."

SB 939 will amend current Penal Code section 784.7 to add human traffickers and exploiters to the list of crimes that are committed by serial perpetrators such as child molesters and rapists to hold them accountable for all crimes in any jurisdiction in which they operate.

Potential human trafficking situations can be reported at any time to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center by calling toll-free (888) 373-7888. The RCAHT task force can be contacted via email at [ht@riversidesheriff.org](mailto:ht@riversidesheriff.org) or via an anonymous toll-free reporting line at (855) 758-FREE (3733).