

HB 1558 -- NONCONSENSUAL DISSEMINATION OF PRIVATE SEXUAL IMAGES

SPONSOR: Neely

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules- Legislative Oversight Committee by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill creates the offense of nonconsensual dissemination of private sexual images, which is a class D felony. A person commits such offense when he or she: intentionally disseminates an image of another person fitting criteria specified in the bill; obtains the image under circumstances in which a reasonable person would know or understand that the image was to remain private; and knows or should have known that the person in the image has not consented to the dissemination. The bill specifies certain exceptions to the offense.

This bill is the same as HB 706 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that it is a great piece of legislation, but the intent behind the dissemination needs to be taken into consideration, because there could be legitimate reasons for dissemination of some images. An overwhelming majority of self-produced, sexually-explicit images are stolen, so this sort of legislation is necessary. Sometimes human traffickers use these types of images and their dissemination as blackmail.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Neely; Missouri Press Association; Motion Picture Association of America; National Council of Jewish Women-St. Louis; Missouri Broadcasters Association; Martha Baur; The Stop Trafficking Project; Christine McDonald, Restoration House; and Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.