

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



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

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News Release

MP JOY SMITH TABLES A BILL TO INTRODUCE MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES FOR THE TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN

Ottawa, ON: Today, Conservative Member of Parliament Joy Smith will introduce a Private Members' Bill to crack down on child trafficking. The bill, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (minimum sentences involving trafficking of persons under the age of eighteen)*, will amend the criminal code to include a minimum prison term of five years for cases where the trafficked victims were under the age of eighteen.

"It is important to remember that we are talking about the sexual abuse, rape, and exploitation of our children," emphasized MP Smith. "We must make it clear that Canada will not tolerate the trafficking of its children and that is why I have proposed a five year mandatory minimum sentence for trafficking of minors."

Last year, a Niagara man was convicted of human trafficking. He made over \$350,000 off of a young 15 year old girl by sexually exploiting her daily over a period of two years. He only received 3 years for the offence of human trafficking and received credit for the 404 days already served.

"Based on the recent lenient human trafficking conviction involving minors, I believe there is clearly a need for Parliament to provide additional guidance to the courts on the trafficking of minors and formally denounce the trafficking of children," said MP Joy Smith.

A mandatory minimum for the trafficking of minors has been recommended by a number of human trafficking related NGO's, government officials and academics. Most recently in October 2008, a Canada – U.S. consultation, held in preparation for the World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, recommended that Canada amend its criminal code to include mandatory minimums for the trafficking of children. The consultation was attended by representatives of NGOs from both the U.S. and Canada, U.S. government representatives, and the Canadian government-appointed Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime.

MP Joy Smith has placed third on the Order of Precedence for Private Members' Business. The Order of Precedence consists of the items of Private Members' Business that are scheduled for debate in the House and is chosen randomly at the beginning of each Parliament. Having placed third in the Order of Precedence, MP Smith will be able to bring her Bill forward early in this session for second reading and debate.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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Note: In addition to MP Joy Smith, spokespeople for the following organizations are prepared to comment on the Private Members Bill.

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