

MEDIA ALERT

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CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE SURVIVORS AND ADVOCATES TO TESTIFY ON BILL REGULATING THE MISUSE OF NONDISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS

AUSTIN, Texas (March 17, 2025) -- This Wednesday at 8 a.m., the Texas House Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence committee [will hear HB 748](#) in Room E2.030. The hearing is available to [watch live here](#). The bill, filed by [Rep. Jeff Leach](#), R-Plano and referred to as “[Trey’s Law](#)”, seeks to prohibit the misuse of nondisclosure agreements (“NDAs”) against child sexual abuse (“CSA”) and trafficking victims in civil settlement agreements.

Cindy Clemishire, whose alleged abuser Robert Morris was [indicted on child sexual abuse charges in Oklahoma last Wednesday](#), is expected to testify in support of the bill at Wednesday’s hearing. Morris was the founding pastor of Dallas megachurch Gateway Church and turned himself in to Oklahoma authorities [today](#). Last summer, Clemishire publicly accused Morris of having abused her when she was a girl, garnering national media attention and the #SheWas12 hashtag.

Clemishire will be joined by Dallas-based crime victim advocate, Elizabeth Carlock Phillips, whose brother Trey Carlock is the namesake of “Trey’s Law”. He died by suicide in 2019 after settling his civil case claiming child sexual abuse and negligence against Kanakuk Kamps, which involved a restrictive NDA. Phillips’ advocacy work on behalf of her late brother and other victims was the featured investigative story in this month’s [D Magazine](#).

“The Kanakuk survivor community is grateful to Chair Leach for filing this bill that will protect victims’ voices and end the abuse of NDAs,” said Phillips. “The practice of legally silencing victims of childhood crimes must end, and it’s in the public interest to do so. Texas has an opportunity to lead on this, and I think we will. This can spark a movement.”

Clemishire and Phillips both testified at an [interim hearing](#) on October 2, 2024, regarding the misuse of NDAs in civil CSA settlements alongside subject matter experts and other advocates in support of the issue. Clemishire testified that she turned down an NDA in her 40s that would have kept her alleged abuse by Morris secret, and Phillips testified that her brother was silenced to his grave by a restrictive NDA following a retraumatizing civil litigation process. She calls it “abuse on top of abuse.”

NDAs (also known as non-disparagement or confidentiality clauses) can be part of a larger settlement agreement or a standalone contract wherein one or more parties agree that certain information will remain confidential. While NDAs were created to keep proprietary business information, such as trade secrets or sensitive client information, confidential, they have since become standard practice in civil settlements related to child sexual abuse and trafficking. As a result, bad actors are protected while survivors are forbidden to share their stories to various extents, depending on the language in a particular settlement agreement or contract.

While 17 states and the U.S. Congress (via the "[Speak Out Act](#)") have clarified the law on NDAs for witnesses and adult survivors of sexual harassment in the workplace, Tennessee is the only state to pass [legislation](#) in 2018 specific to prohibiting NDAs in civil CSA settlements, rendering them "void and unenforceable."

In addition to Leach's HB 748, four other versions of "Trey's Law" have been introduced in Texas this session. They include [SB 1587](#) (Sen. Kelly Hancock), [SB 835](#) (Sen. Angela Paxton), [HB 2411](#) (Rep. Mitch Little), and [HB 1974](#) (Rep. David Cook). Rep. Leach's bill is the first to get a hearing in Texas. Versions of "Trey's Law" have also been filed in Missouri, as [heard in the House Judiciary Committee](#) on February 26, 2025.

This Wednesday's hearing is the next step toward Leach's bill reaching a House floor vote, should it pass out of committee. After the House vote, the bill would still need Senate approval to pass the Legislature and reach the Governor's desk to be signed into law.

The public is invited to submit written testimony [here](#). Instructions related to public access to the meeting location are available [here](#).

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