

MEDIA ALERT
April 17, 2025
media@treyslaw.com

MISSOURI HOUSE BACKS “TREY’S LAW” BILL PROHIBITING MISUSE OF NONDISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS (NDAs) IN CIVIL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CASES

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (April 17, 2025)-- Yesterday, [HB 709](#) was [voted perfected](#) by the Missouri House of Representatives. It is anticipated it will be third read next week with a roll-call vote. The bill, known as “[Trey’s Law](#)”, was filed by [Rep. Brian Seitz](#) (R) and seeks to prohibit the misuse of nondisclosure agreements (“NDAs”) against child sexual abuse and trafficking victims in civil settlement agreements.

“These are legal mechanisms that were created to protect trade secrets, not trauma secrets,” said Rep. Seitz in his address to the house floor yesterday. Seven other representatives from both parties spoke in favor of the bill, including Rep. Tonya Rush (D), who disclosed her own abuse on the House floor.

“This is the first time that this has come out of my mouth,” Rep. Rush said. “I have never repeated this to anyone, not my mom, not my dad, nobody. I don’t think any child should be silenced at all.”

Senator Brad Hudson has championed the companion bill, SB590, that was passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee and has been added as an amendment to other complementary Senate bills.

Several victims of Kanakuk Kamps, a summer camp ministry based in Rep Seitz’s district, [have testified](#) in support of Trey’s Law. A public [petition](#) launched in March 2021 protesting Kanakuk’s use of NDAs to silence child sexual abuse victims has gained over 27,000 signatures to date.

Legislators and advocates in various states have referred to this legislation as “Trey’s Law,” in honor of [Trey Carlock](#), who died by suicide in 2019 after being groomed and abused by convicted sex offender and former Kanakuk director, Pete Newman. Trey’s older sister, Elizabeth Carlock Phillips, is a crime victim advocate and [has testified](#) that her late brother was silenced to his grave by a restrictive NDA following a retraumatizing civil litigation process with Kanakuk and its insurers.

“It’s no exaggeration for me to claim this is a matter of life and death,” Phillips testified at a February 26 hearing on the bill. “When I say that my brother was silenced to his grave, I mean he was literally scared to death. He hesitated to tell his story even in confidential, therapeutic settings, for fear that Kanakuk would come after him again like they did an earlier John Doe.”

A similar bill [passed](#) the Texas House of Representatives unanimously last Tuesday, immediately following the release of a [New York Times](#) article highlighting NDA and civil statute of limitations reform efforts in Missouri and Texas for survivors of childhood crimes.

###

How does NDA reform serve survivors of child sexual abuse?

NDAs (also known as non-disparagement or confidentiality clauses) are 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, survivors are forbidden to share their stories to various extents, depending on the language in a particular settlement agreement. Organizations such as [NDA Free](#) have sparked a movement against this practice.

While 18 states and 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](#) specific to prohibiting the misuse of NDAs in civil child sex abuse settlements, rendering them “void and unenforceable.”