

MEDIA ALERT

May 7, 2025

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TEXAS SENATE COMMITTEE TO HEAR HOUSE BILL REGULATING THE MISUSE OF
NONDISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS IN CIVIL SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

*Elizabeth Carlock Phillips, Cindy Clemishire, and other advocates and survivors of child sexual abuse
are expected to testify in support of the bill known as “Trey’s Law.”*

AUSTIN, Texas (May 7, 2025) -- Tomorrow at 9 a.m., the Texas Senate State Affairs committee [will hear HB 748](#) in the Senate Chamber. A live stream of the hearing will be available [here](#). The bill was filed by [Rep. Jeff Leach](#), R-Plano, and by [Sen. Angela Paxton](#), R-McKinney, as Senate Bill 835. This bill is referred to as “[Trey’s Law](#),” named after [Trey Carlock](#) from Dallas who died by suicide after enduring a decade of child sexual abuse at Kanakuk Kamps followed by a retraumatizing civil lawsuit that ended with a restrictive NDA. The bill seeks to end the misuse of nondisclosure agreements (“NDAs”) against child sexual abuse, assault and trafficking victims in civil settlement agreements as a matter of public safety and concern.

Several child sexual abuse survivors and advocates are expected to testify in support of the bill, including Cindy Clemishire, the whistleblower on child sexual abuse by Gateway Church founder, Robert Morris. Morris was [indicted on child sexual abuse charges in Oklahoma](#) in March and is expected to appear before court in Oklahoma this Friday.

[Elizabeth Carlock Phillips](#), a certified [crime victim advocate](#) whose brother Trey Carlock is the namesake of “Trey’s Law”, will also testify in support of the bill, which just passed the General Assembly in Missouri where Kanakuk Kamps is headquartered, and it now awaits Governor Kehoe’s signature. Several Texas-based survivors of Kanakuk abuse and other institutions are expected to join Clemishire and Phillips in testifying for the bill.

“This hearing brings renewed hope to survivors of child sexual abuse and other crimes who have also endured the weaponization of NDAs in civil settlement agreements,” Phillips said. “While this is called ‘Trey’s Law,’ I could insert many names whom this law honors and helps. In our collective testimonies, we hope to represent the voices of countless brave survivors of childhood crimes who have been unable to speak freely due to the hush money lawfully allowed in Texas’ civil courts, which only protects bad actors and conceals important information from the public.”

[Clemishire](#) and [Phillips](#) both testified in the House committee hearing on the bill in March. 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, calling NDAs “abuse on top of abuse.” Following the House Judiciary Committee hearing, the bill passed committee immediately and unanimously to the full House, and achieved a unanimous House floor vote on April 9.

Tomorrow’s hearing is the next step toward Leach’s bill passing a Senate committee, followed by a Senate floor vote to pass both chambers and end up on Governor Abbott’s desk to be signed into law.

How does NDA reform serve survivors of child sexual 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 18 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." More information is available at TreysLaw.com.

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