



PRESS RELEASE

REP. JENNIFER WILLIAMSON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 36

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For More Information, Contact:
Scott Moore: 503-986-1904

House Votes to Allow Courts to Consider Domestic Violence, Sex Trafficking in Sentencing

SALEM – The Oregon House of Representatives voted unanimously today to join seven other states in considering whether someone convicted of a crime did so because of domestic violence in sentencing for people convicted of a crime.

[House Bill 3176](#) authorizes courts in Oregon to consider whether a defendant committed a crime while under duress, compulsion, direction or pressure from person who has committed domestic violence against defendant or forced defendant to engage in commercial sex act.

“Our criminal justice system should not be re-victimizing those who have suffered at the hands of domestic abusers or have been trafficked,” said **Rep. Jennifer Williamson (D-Portland)**, vice chair of the House Committee on Judiciary. “The staggering reality of women in prisons is that almost all of them have been victims of abuse or are there because an abuser coerced them into committing a crime. We can and should do better within our criminal justice system.”

National statistics show that between 80 and 85 percent of women attribute their incarceration to their relationship with an abuser and 79 percent of women in federal and state prisons reported being the victims of physical abuse.

The bill now moves to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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