

‘Sextortion’  
Law goes  
into affect  
this week

By TOM LATEK  
*Kentucky Today*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – Among the many pieces of legislation passed by the General Assembly this year which will take effect on June 27 is one sponsored by Sen. Julie Raque Adams, R-Louisville, that makes sexual extortion, or “sextortion” as it’s often called, a separate crime.

The law, created with the passage of Senate Bill 73, defines sexual extortion as using threats—such as exposure, violence, or reputational harm—to coerce someone into providing sexual images, engaging in sexual acts, or giving money or something of value. The offense can be charged as either a misdemeanor or a felony, depending on the severity of the harm to the victim and factors such as the use of threats, prior offenses, the victim’s age, or abuse of authority.

Those convicted of felonies under the statute will be added to the state’s sex offender registry. The law also allows victims or their families to seek civil damages, legal fees, and court costs.

“The FBI reports sexual extortion is the fastest-growing crime against children,” said Sen. Julie Raque Adams (R-Louisville) when presenting Senate Bill 73 to the Kentucky Senate in February. “It is calculated, it is cruel, and it thrives on fear and silence.”

The FBI received over 54,000 sextortion-related reports in 2024, up from 34,000 the previous year – a 30 percent increase in just six months.

Financial losses from these schemes have totaled nearly \$65 million over the past two years, and more than 20 teens have died by suicide after being targeted. Most cases involve financially motivated schemes aimed at boys aged 14 to 17.

The new law lets young victims know that they don’t have to suffer in silence, outlining how schools must provide age-appropriate information to students and parents each year, and post signs in school buildings with details on how to report sextortion and where to seek support, including the national suicide prevention hotline.

The effort to pass anti-sextortion legislation started gaining momentum in Kentucky when Teena Halbig, a member of the state’s Human Trafficking Task Force Prevention and Education Committee, formed the Kentucky Sextortion Coalition. The group spent two years advocating for the measure before the new law was approved.

“I initiated this legislation in 2024 because it will save lives,” Halbig stated, adding that coalition members worked together to strengthen the final bill.

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF BUDGET ORDINANCE			
BUDGET SUMMARY			
AN ORDINANCE Relating to the Annual Budget and Appropriations.			
BE IT ORDAINED BY THE FISCAL COURT OF HARLAN COUNTY, KENTUCKY:			
SECTION ONE. The following budget is adopted for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and the amounts stated are appropriated for the purposes indicated.			
(01)	General Fund		
	General Government		3,425,079.00
	Protection to Persons and Property		141,664.00
	General Health and Sanitation		1,949,041.00
	Social Services		5,921,679.00
	Recreation and Culture		1,427,200.00
	Airport		500,000.00
	Debt Service		120,000.00
	Capital Projects		902,120.00
	Administration		2,010,119.00
	Total		16,396,902.00
(02)	Road Fund		
	Roads		2,355,500.00
	Debt Service		145,000.00
	Administration		583,700.00
	Total		3,084,200.00
(03)	Jail Fund		
	Protection to Persons and Property		2,170,000.00
	Administration		838,100.00
	Total		3,008,100.00
(04)	LGEA Fund		
	General Government		22,500.00
	Protection to Persons and Property		150,000.00
	General Health and Sanitation		485,500.00
	Social Services		850,000.00
	Recreation and Culture		430,000.00
	Debt Service		8,400.00
	Administration		322,300.00
	Total		2,268,700.00
(05)	Federal Grants Fund		
	General Health and Sanitation		1,050,012.00
	Social Services		100,000.00
	Total		1,150,012.00
(06)	Bond Sinking Fund		
	Debt Service		841,463.00
	Total		841,463.00
(07)	LGED Fund		
	General Government		467,000.00
	General Health and Sanitation		1,070,450.00
	Social Services		398,380.00
	Recreation and Culture		831,643.00
	Debt Service		115,000.00
	Capital Projects		2,533,875.00
	Total		5,416,348.00
(08)	Opioid Fund		
	General Government		45,000.00
	Social Services		45,000.00
	Administration		65,810.00
	Total		155,810.00
(09)	E-911 Fund		
	Protection to Persons and Property		635,000.00
	Administration		16,535.00
	Total		651,535.00
(10)	Clerk SB 135 Fund		
	General Government		40,000
	Total		40,000
(11)	ARPA Fund		
	Other Capital Projects		100,000.00
	Total		100,000.00
SECTION TWO. Adopted this 17th day of June, 2025.			
Daniel W. Mosley Harlan County Judge/Executive			
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY			
All interested persons and organizations in Harlan County are hereby notified that a copy of the county's adopted budget in full is available for public inspection at the Office of the County Judge/Executive during normal business hours.			