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Alabama Lawmakers Push to Expand Death Penalty Following Bibb County Child Trafficking Case

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Alabama legislators are pushing to expand the state's death penalty law to include those convicted of sexually assaulting young children. The proposal follows the discovery of a child sex trafficking ring operating in a storm shelter in Bibb County, which authorities say involved at least ten victims and may have ties to gang activity.

At a press conference Thursday, Representative Matt Simpson (Republican–Daphne) and Senator April Weaver (Republican–Brierfield) announced legislation that would allow prosecutors to pursue the death penalty for individuals convicted of raping or sodomizing children under the age of 12. The bill, if passed, would mark a major shift in Alabama's criminal code and directly challenge the U.S. Supreme Court's 2008 decision that restricted capital punishment to crimes involving the loss of life.

“The time is now for Alabama to act,” Rep. Simpson stated, emphasizing the urgency of holding offenders accountable. Senator Weaver added, “Stealing the innocence of a child... should put you on the express line to the death chamber.”

Weaver argued that such heinous acts warrant the most severe punishment, describing the proposed use of nitrogen hypoxia, a newly authorized execution method in the state, as a just response.

The legislation was introduced alongside Bibb County Sheriff Jody Wade and Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall, both of whom voiced support. The case that spurred the proposal involves a two-year-long operation discovered earlier this year in an underground storm shelter. Authorities announced the investigation publicly on July 19, 2025, though it began in February. So far, seven suspects have been arrested, with more charges anticipated.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is assisting in the investigation, including probing possible gang affiliations and the immigration status of the suspects. Sheriff Wade urged anyone with additional information to contact the Bibb County Sheriff's Office.

While the proposed law would not apply retroactively to the current Bibb County case,

lawmakers say their goal is to prevent future crimes and deliver harsher consequences for the most egregious offenses against children. Similar measures have recently gained traction in states such as Florida, Tennessee, Idaho, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

Authorities continue to search for further suspects and victims, and the investigation remains ongoing. The Bibb County Sheriff's Office can be reached at (205) 926-4683 for tips or information.