

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2709

June 18, 2021

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear General Garland,

I write to you today to draw your attention to an egregious inter-state child sex trafficking case in Nebraska. A case such as this demands the full engagement of the Department of Justice to ensure that justice is done.

In the summer of 2019, William “Billy” Quinn used Facebook to lure a 15-year-old girl from North Carolina to Nebraska by offering her a job in his café.¹ The first time they met, he forced her to perform sex acts on him.² When she tried to escape, he threatened her by placing a knife against her throat, and she maintained a relationship with him out of fear that he would hurt her.³ By the summer of 2020, he had forced the minor to move into his home where he raped her at least 100 times.⁴ He would frequently drive the girl around in his truck and offer other men that he knew the opportunity to abuse her.⁵ On multiple particularly horrific occasions, he took the girl to a hotel and forced her to have sex with a group of men whom he charged \$50 each for the opportunity to rape her.⁶ Nebraska prosecutors have charged him with a wide variety of offenses, and his trial began this week.⁷

The federal government has a critical role in fighting interstate human trafficking, especially when it involves a minor. As such, I ask that the Department engage with our state and local law enforcement in Nebraska to offer its full support to ensure that Quinn and his fellow child rapists are all prosecuted to the full extent of the law for these despicable acts. In addition, I ask that you undertake a full review of the authorities available to the Department to investigate, interdict, and prosecute sex trafficking cases and advise me and the other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee as to any additional tools the Department needs to fight this scourge within 30 days.

¹ Ashley Bebensee, *Furnas County sex trafficking victim said she was sold to several men for \$50*, Lincoln Journal Star, June 17, 2021, https://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/crime-and-courts/furnas-county-sex-trafficking-victim-said-she-was-sold-to-several-men-for-50/article_90e66164-00fd-5974-b9ac-87f6c8bb39c3.html

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben Sasse". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the word "Sasse".

Ben Sasse
United States Senator