

SENATE BILL 501

By Watson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 13, Part 5, relative to victims of sexual offenses.

WHEREAS, victims of rape who waited to step forward about the offense deserve equal protections under the law, and;

WHEREAS, the age of the victim at the time of the offense should be the only age considered in a court of law; now, therefore

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-506(a), is amended by deleting the language "the victim is at least fifteen (15) but less than eighteen (18) years of age" and substituting instead "the victim is at least fifteen (15) but less than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the offense".

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-506(b)(1), is amended by deleting the language "The victim is at least thirteen (13) but less than fifteen (15) years of age" and substituting instead "The victim is at least thirteen (13) but less than fifteen (15) years of age at the time of the offense".

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-506(b)(2), is amended by deleting the language "The victim is at least fifteen (15) but less than eighteen (18) years of age" and substituting instead "The victim is at least fifteen (15) but less than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the offense".

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-506(c), is amended by deleting the language "the victim is at least thirteen (13) but less than eighteen (18) years of

age" and substituting instead "the victim is at least thirteen (13) but less than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the offense".

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-509, is amended by deleting subdivision (a)(1) and substituting instead:

(1) The minor is less than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the offense;

SECTION 6. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-522, is amended by deleting the language "the victim is more than eight (8) years of age but less than thirteen (13) years of age" and substituting instead "the victim is more than eight (8) years of age but less than thirteen (13) years of age at the time of the offense".

SECTION 7. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-531, is amended by deleting subsection (a) and substituting instead:

(a) Aggravated rape of a child is the unlawful sexual penetration of a victim by the defendant or the defendant by a victim, if the victim is eight (8) years of age or less at the time of the offense.

SECTION 8. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-532(a)(1), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting instead:

(1) The victim is at least thirteen (13) but less than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the offense;

SECTION 9. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-535, is amended by deleting the language "the victim is less than eighteen (18) years of age" and substituting instead "the victim is less than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of the offense".

SECTION 10. This act takes effect July 1, 2023, the public welfare requiring it.