

Pennsylvania Attorney General announces five additional child sex abuse charges this year while advocacy groups demand their bill

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Pennsylvania Attorney General Michelle Henry spoke at a press conference in Philadelphia Friday morning, announcing five defendants charged with child sex abuse. This press conference was the third of its nature in the past year, and advocacy groups are looking to the Governor for change.

“*Children are some of our most vulnerable members of our society. They should be nurtured and protected. But instead of protecting these children, the defendants violated and abused them.*”

-Michelle Henry, Pennsylvania Attorney General

The Attorney General's office added the five cases to an ongoing investigation with an additional eight child sex abuse offenders. All 14 defendants are members of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Henry could not comment on a relationship between the Jehovah's Witness community and these cases.

"Children are some of our most vulnerable members of our society," said Henry. "They should be nurtured and protected. But instead of protecting these children, the defendants violated and abused them".

All the defendants were in positions of trust with the children, with the youngest being just four years old.

"I will say that this office will never stop working to bring justice to those who have victimized," says Henry. But advocacy groups know that there is one person who can genuinely make an impact – and uphold a promise he made while running.

Marci Hamilton, the CEO and Founder of Child USA calls out Governor Shapiro for failing to address his promise to survivors.

"Gov. Shapiro included survivors in his campaign . . . [he] needs to refocus on part of what got him into office and a promise that he made to survivors that this would be the first bill that he would sign, and now we don't even have a bill," says Hamilton. "This is the one that the governor said was his priority, and we want to see results."

The amendment passed in both the House and the Senate but has been disregarded by the Senate with unrelated amendments.

"Enough is enough," says Hamilton. "Let's just get this done."