Use of a Minor in Drug Operations Act

Summary

This Act would create a new offense of using a minor in a drug operation. Currently, those who use a minor in a drug operation can be convicted for distribution to a minor. This Act would provide penalties similar to those mandated for distribution to minors by the model Drug-Free School Zone Act, while removing the need to prove actual distribution.

The penalty for first time violators of this Act would be a sentence ranging from 10 to 20 years, while repeat offenders would be sentenced to 20 years to life. This Act would further require that the minimum sentence be mandatory.

Model Legislation

{Title, enacting clause, etc.}

Section 1. {Title.} This Act shall be known and may cited as the Use of a Minor in Drug Operations Act.

Section 2. {Use of a minor.} It is unlawful for any individual 18 or more years of age knowingly or intentionally to solicit, induce, encourage, intimidate, employ, hire, or use an individual under 18 years of age to unlawfully transport, carry, sell, give away, prepare for sale, or peddle any controlled substance.

Section 3. {First offense penalty.} A person who violates Section 2 is guilty of a crime and upon conviction is punishable by a mandatory term of incarceration in a state correctional facility of not less than 10 years and not more than 20 years and a fine of up to $300,000.

Section 4. {Second offense penalty.} An individual who violates Section 2 after a previous conviction under that section is punishable by a mandatory term of incarceration in a state correctional facility of not less than 20 years and not more than life and a fine of up to $500,000.

Section 5. It is not a defense to a violation of this Act that the accused did not know the age of the individual protected under this Act.

Section 6. {Mandatory sentence.} Notwithstanding any other provision of [cite state controlled substance act], with respect to an individual who is found to have violated this Act, adjudication of guilt or imposition of sentence may not be suspended, deferred, or withheld; nor may the individual be eligible for parole before serving the mandatory term of incarceration prescribed by this Act.

Section 7. {Severability clause.}

Section 8. {Repealer clause.}

Section 9. {Effective date.}