

# Human trafficking law goes unused

## Immigrants afraid to testify, SF D.A. says

A law passed nearly a year ago to help curb human trafficking in the state still has never been used to prosecute those suspected of enslaving immigrants, proponents of the bill said.



HARRIS

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said he hoped the bill would be a national model in countering modern-day slavery when he signed it into law last year.

The bill, he said, would end "a horrific crime that our society cannot abide."

But authorities say the law makes it

too difficult to prove immigrant workers were being held against their will, one of the criteria for classifying victims of human trafficking. Investigators also said victims often are reluctant to testify against their captors for fear of retaliation against family abroad.

"We certainly can see that the fear (on the part) of immigrants particularly has been even deeper than we expected," said San Francisco District Attorney Kamala Harris, a co-sponsor of the law.

Harris maintains the state law will be a valuable tool in cutting down on human trafficking in the future. It provides penalties of three to five years in prison for traffickers — four to eight if the victim is a minor.

# Cops kill unarmed groom

An angry crowd demanded yesterday to know why New York City police officers killed an unarmed black man on the day of his wedding, firing dozens of shots that also wounded two of the man's friends, in a case with racial overtones.

At a vigil and rally the day after 23-year-old Sean Bell was supposed to have married the mother of his two young children, a crowd led by the Rev. Al Sharpton shouted "No justice, no peace."

NYPD spokesman Paul Browne said yesterday the five officers were placed on paid administrative leave pending the

investigation. The shootings occurred at about 4 a.m. Saturday outside a strip club where Bell's bachelor party was held.

Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said Saturday the department was still piecing together what happened and whether the shooting was justified. Police fired at a car driven by Bell after it struck an undercover officer and hit an unmarked NYPD minivan. Police thought one of the men in the car might have had a gun but investigators found no weapons. It was unclear what prompted police to open fire, Kelly said.