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Connecticut Right to Life is in **FULL SUPPORT** of the following bills:

SB 1158 **AAC Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking**

HB 6696 **AAC Enhanced State Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking**

In addition to being fully supportive of efforts to reduce and eliminate sexual exploitation, trafficking and domestic abuse, we feel that the Committee and Legislature needs to more fully understand the dynamics and factors of this elicited and immoral dehumanization of women and men. These bills and others being proposed are good first steps at seizing the property and assets of traffickers and pimps; however without offering an exit strategy to enable victims to escape sexual servitude, we will be unable to arrest and bring such pimps to justice. Our testimony therefore provides suggestions to assist the victim which is just as important as the Legislature's efforts to reducing the demand in our society.

Every night we are saddened to see news stories about new victims of abuse. We hope to provide opportunities to pull women and men who are victims of this trade out of the cycle of physical, emotional and psychological abuse- but we must stress:

Some of the most recent cases of sexual exploitation include:

- A Fire Chief in Coventry exploited a 15 year old junior firefighter into having a sexual relationship and then paying for her abortion. He was only charged with 2nd degree sexual assault and risk of injury.
- Bloomfield resident Adam Gault lures a 14 year old family friend to be his sex slave along with others in his residence for almost two years. The girl was under Gault's mental and emotional control and moved her to Florida, Vermont and North Carolina. At the time police discovered the girl, they assumed she would only be found dead. Only when questioned did the girl provide information about her movement and having two abortions. It did not assist in stopping the sex slavery.
- A Vermont boy was prostituted by two West Haven firefighters for several years before authorities finally arrested the alleged perpetrators at least seven years later.

- According to national statistics, the average age for someone to begin in the sex trade is 14. The average LIFESPAN of these is SEVEN years. This means many will not live much past age 21.
- An FBI article notes the raid of a “conventional midcentury home in Plainfield NJ that sat in a nice middle-class neighborhood. Unbeknownst to neighbors, the house was part of a network of houses in the New York area where underage girls and young women from dozens of countries were trafficked and kept captive... They encountered rancid, doorless bathrooms; bare, putrid mattresses; and a stash of penicillin, “morning after” pills, and an antiulcer medication that can induce abortion.” The FBI article notes that cheap motels are one of many havens for prostitutes to be forced into sex trafficking.
- Data from the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) break down the types of calls received from Connecticut. 44% of the 125 calls received from Connecticut concerned persons calling for themselves or referrals. 25% were tips from third parties.
- 55% of the calls statewide were from cities and 45% from suburbs and towns.
- **Only 1 call out of 125 was from a medical professional.**

In each of these cases, as well as others, we need to ask ourselves:

Why were these victims abused for so long?

What could have intervened to bring them out of these conditions?

How can we develop new statutes to do this?

Cycle of Control

According to several websites dealing with the sex trade, teens lured into the practice are often very innocent, wanting to feel wanted and appreciated, sometimes believing they are falling in love. Victims are often subjected to coerced physical and emotional abuse. A cycle of dependency and abuse develops.

All persons engaged in the sex trade and human trafficking becomes a high risk for physical injury, contracting STDs, and pregnancy. Condoms and contraception are tools to prevent pregnancy. Any woman who becomes pregnant would be unable to meet the expected income obligations imposed by their pimps. A pregnancy is also a liability for a john or the controlled abusers themselves, as it can serve as physical evidence of trafficking, statutory rape and other crimes.

Any time a victim encounters a medical provider presents an opportunity for someone to intervene in this cycle of violence and abuse. Private medical evaluation and consultation gives some privacy where such victims can shed light into their life. So far, these are missed opportunities to intervene in a cycle of abuse.

HB 1158 Section 2

We support the development of notice to be available. We believe that this should include signage in medical facilities very similar to mandated emergency care notices already in existence in hospital emergency rooms. The notice shall be placed in a conspicuous place, as well as restrooms where privacy might be expected and a victim can copy the information without interference.

Brochure and pamphlet distribution should also be included within this requirement at certain places listed in Section 3.

HB 1158 Section 3

We support the public service campaign being proposed in the form of notices intended for the abused to provide resources to seek alternatives and escape routes from a sexual lifestyle. Today, discovery of sexual abuse is often incidental. This doesn't need to be the case.

HB 1158 Section 3 requires bilingual notice to be placed at truck stops and bars to provide assistance to victims. This is a good start, yet only reaches a portion of the targeted audience. DCF itself states it has served just over one hundred victims over the last five years, while thousands slip through the cracks. Where else should this bilingual notice and similar materials be posted and distributed?

Many victims are lured into the sex trade around ages 12 or 14, and some as young as age 8. One source states that the subsequent life span of some victims is only seven years. This age range is unlikely to see such notices in bars whose legal age to enter is 21.

Victims and pimps take many steps – many of the coercive –to prevent or terminate pregnancy. Visits to a doctor or abortion clinics are opportunities where counseling and requirements of voluntariness could prompt a mandated reporter to intervene and assist a victim.

Language should be added to Section 2 requiring posting of notice and distribution of materials at these types of facilities:

- Healthcare facilities providing pregnancy testing
- Any facility providing STD testing
- All abortion services and counseling centers
- College and school based health clinics
- Pharmacies
- Emergency Rooms

Much like truck stops, we also suggest other common public areas that might become venues for sex trafficking or where young women may frequent:

- Adult oriented businesses
- Hotels and motels
- Train stations, buses, bus stops and transportation centers
- Check cashing facilities
- Shopping malls, homeless shelters
- A notice accompanying classified ads for personal services

Connecticut could also become the first state in the nation to require the posting of a toll-free phone number for the National Human Trafficking Resource Center on packages of condoms or contraceptive devices.

HB 6696 Enhanced State Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking

We are in full support of this proposed bill.

Section 1 (a) is contains language that defines trafficking as promoting sex acts with the threat to force, fraud or coercion. We believe that added language related to the definition of coercion in 53a-192 should also include threats of the denial of housing, food or other basic living necessities.

Creating Enhanced Barriers to Trafficking:

We urge additional steps to be included within HB 6696 to create barriers to prevent human trafficking. As illustrated in our case examples, Connecticut has loopholes that permit human trafficking:

1. A pregnancy – whether or not the woman keeps the baby – is an opportunity for any woman or girl to escape an abusive relationship or sexual abuse. Currently, two bordering states- Massachusetts and Rhode Island – require parental involvement if a minor seeks an abortion. Since all Connecticut abortion facilities are a short drive from all points in both neighboring states, women have travelled to Connecticut to circumvent their local states’ laws. This constitutes 9% of all abortions on minors under the age of 18 from 2002-2011.

91% of these cases came from Rhode Island or Massachusetts.

This disparity provides a barrier for neighboring law enforcement agencies to gather necessary evidence for prosecution.

2. Because girls as young as 8, 12 and 14 engaged in prostitution and the sex industry, statutory rape is a very real concern without parental involvement being able to intervene if a victim seeks an abortion.

3. We recommend a new section be added to HB 1158 creating a penalty for any person who coerces another to obtain an abortion, consistent with Sec. 53a-65 and Sec. 53a-192 (with added definitions of coercion to include detrimental employment and educational opportunities). Three other states have similar laws. They include Michigan, Nebraska and South Dakota.
We will submit suggestive additional language.

4. The international organization Shared Hope International gives the State of Connecticut an "F" grade for its limited laws combatting human trafficking. One of the highlighted areas is that Connecticut has limited provisions that limit the conflicts of interest in persons financially benefitting from human trafficking and its byproducts. We recommend that any person who wishes to obtain an abortion should first seek consultation with a crisis pregnancy center before an abortion provider. This allows a barrier between a financial conflict of interest that may benefit from profits of continued sexual trafficking and exploitation.

We thank the Committee for this opportunity to provide testimony. We look forward to working with legislators to improve these two bills so they will have meaningful impact on victims of sex trafficking, reuniting families and providing these women with hope to live more fulfilling lives again.

Consistent with Section 4 of HB 6696, we would like to be involved with the task force to study additional solutions.

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2. "Charges Added in Alleged Abduction". By Donna Tommelleo, Associated press. 8/2/07. Cited in Boston Globe website and accessed on 4/15/13.
http://www.boston.com/news/local/connecticut/articles/2007/08/02/charges_added_in_alleged_abduction/
3. <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/25/magazine/25SEXTRAFFIC.html> (accessed July 19, 2010; referenced from an FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin on Human Sex Trafficking dated March, 2011 by Amanda Walker- Rodriguez and Rodney Hill. http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/law-enforcement-bulletin/march_2011/human_sex_trafficking
4. National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) Data Breakdown – Connecticut State Report. January 1, 2012- December 31st 2012.
<https://na4.salesforce.com/sfc/p/300000006E4S/a/600000004PSX/ZgjnJlo7Q6Q9M9xS3BL9ogLOxfuwS3wxjFZ.AmM2ht0=>
5. Parental notification – "State Policies In Brief; Parental Involvement in Minors' Abortions". The Guttmacher Institute; April 1, 2013.
http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_PIMA.pdf
6. The State of Abortion in Connecticut, 5th Annual Report, October, 2012; Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference.
<http://www.ctcatholic.org/documents/ConnecticutStateofAbortion2012Report.pdf>