



— SPEAKER'S TASK FORCE ON — HUMAN TRAFFICKING

JERRY O'CONNOR, TASK FORCE CHAIR

For Immediate Release
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Statement from Chairman Jerry O'Connor (R-Fond du Lac) on the Assembly's Passage of Human Trafficking Task Force Bills

Madison... As Chairman of the Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking, Rep. Jerry O'Connor (R-Fond du Lac) issues the following statement after the Assembly passes 7 bills from the bipartisan Task Force Final Report:

"I had the honor of chairing the Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking. We learned from agency representatives, DOJ, County DA offices, multiple speakers from local law enforcement, and not-for-profit victim support organizations what a challenge it is to turn the tide of human trafficking in Wisconsin.

Our task force focused on sex trafficking and child sex trafficking in Wisconsin. The number of individuals trapped in this world is unbelievable.

We learned that 60-70% of sex trafficking begins in our junior and senior high schools. This results in kids who do not finish school and have not learned the skills to allow them to survive on their own. These victims have become dependent on their trafficker for their every need. This is an extreme tragedy.

In the end, the Task Force came together and introduced a bipartisan package of bills and recommendations to set the captives free and help them to begin to rebuild their lives. The legislation passed today increases awareness of the issue, imposes tougher punishments for soliciting prostitutes, and makes it easier for victims to sue their traffickers.

Here is a brief rundown of the bills addressed in our Task Force Report that the Assembly passed today.

- **AB 970:** Relating to: sex offender registration for certain crimes.
- **AB 972:** Relating to: solicitation for prostitution and providing a penalty
- **AB 973:** Relating to: mandatory training regarding human trafficking for employees of community-based residential facilities and owners of certain entities and certain other employees and granting rule-making authority
- **AB 974:** Relating to: the civil causes of action for human trafficking and trafficking a child.
- **AB 976:** Relating to: the testimony of a child in a criminal proceeding for a human trafficking crime.
- **AB 977:** Relating to: required human trafficking prevention instruction in certain grades and teacher training related to identifying victims of child trafficking.
- **AB 979:** Relating to: a human trafficking victim services grant program, granting rule-making authority, and making an appropriation.

For more details, please visit our Task Force website at <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/committees/human-trafficking/>. In addition to these recommended bills from the Task Force report, there are references to bills introduced outside of the Task Force and other initiatives that are recommended for future consideration. The bottom line is that our goal is to 'set these captives free.'

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