



Wisconsin State Legislature

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT: LUTHER OLSEN (800) 991-5541

August 5, 2016

Getting the Word Out – You Can Help Victims of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking has been referred to as modern-day slavery. It is traditionally defined as the exploitation of people, often for sexual exploitation or forced labor. Trafficking victims typically are recruited through force or deception. This year alone, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline received 168 calls from locations in Wisconsin which helped identify 33 led to human trafficking cases and the year is not over yet. The most common type of caller with a tip was a community member, which is why it is important to spread the word that trafficking happens here in Wisconsin. It is important to also let people know that there are resources available to victims and reporting a tip can help find these women, men, and children who are victims of human trafficking.

An advocate for human trafficking victims recently called Wisconsin a hub of human trafficking. Between August 2010 and August 2012, the Milwaukee Police Department identified 77 youth who had been victims of sex trafficking. 92 percent of these victims were female. These victims came from areas around the state, including Milwaukee, Waupaca, Menomonee Falls and Wittenberg. During this time period, 51 individual traffickers were identified by the Milwaukee Police Department.

Last session, I cosponsored and voted for a bill, Assembly Bill 16, to let victims of human trafficking know that help was available by requiring the Department of Justice to develop a poster with the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline number that can be downloaded from their website and posted by businesses and civic organizations. The hotline

number is 1-888-373-7888. Calls are confidential and the hotline is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week. Wisconsin is not alone in efforts to raise awareness about the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline; 25 other states require or encourage a hotline number to be posted or promoted in their state. Some states require certain businesses to post the number. Wisconsin's law makes the poster available and encourages law enforcement to partner with businesses and organizations to create a network throughout the state where victims can turn for help.

The DOJ has created a website www.BeFreeWisconsin.com with resources to learn how to recognize victims of human trafficking and how to help them. The website includes links to the poster, explains what the National Human Trafficking Resource Center does, links to the state's Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce and includes specialized guides for health care providers, law enforcement, schools, domestic violence attorneys, domestic violence advocates and social service agencies. These are critical tools to help identify victims of human trafficking. It also includes public service announcements, awareness materials and handouts that can be used by community groups to help spread the word that help is available.

On July 28th, Wisconsin Attorney General Brad Schimel along with Representative Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton), and Senator Jerry Petrowski (R - Marathon), the lead authors of Assembly Bill 16, announced the creation of critical partnerships in the effort to help victims of human trafficking. These partners include the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, United Migrants Opportunity Services, Inc. (UMOS), community organizations, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, victims' advocates, the Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers, the Wisconsin Hotels and Lodging Association, the Wisconsin Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, Wisconsin Urban & Rural Transit Association, and others. They also unveiled the human trafficking awareness poster, which is free and is available in both English and Spanish. Watch for it at gas stations, rest areas, transit stations, hotels, hospitals, and businesses where human trafficking victims might see it.

I am asking you to consider printing, displaying and sharing this poster. We must stop this atrocious crime that affects women, men, and children, and I know we can make a difference by

getting the word out about www.BeFreeWisconsin.com and the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline. Again, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline number is 1-888-373-7888. You can call this number for help, to report a tip, or receive information. The hotline is accessible in over 200 languages.

If you have any questions about any of the information I have included or if you have suggestions on other topics or issues you would like learn more about, you may call my office toll-free at (800) 991-5541; write me at P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707; or e-mail me at: Sen.Olsen@legis.state.wi.us. You can also sign up for our newsletter at our website: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senate/sen14/news/index.htm>.

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