

Resource Center for the understanding of and responding to Human Trafficking

Definition per U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age. Trafficking is exploitation-based. The key legislation in the United States is the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

Signs/indicators: if not in control of their own documents, i.e.-ID, Passport; Is the victim free to move about; forced to perform sex acts; recruited for one job and forced to engage in some other job; were they coached in what to say; are wages garnished; are they allowed to visit friends, socialize, or attend religious services; is the person a juvenile; are they deprived of basic needs, i.e. - food, water, sleep, medical care, or other necessities; threatened with deportation or law enforcement action; victim or family threatened if they try to escape.

Lutheran Position: That human trafficking is part of the societal, systemic landscape of patriarchy and sexism. Religious communities around the world are firm in their resolve to end human trafficking because what is at stake is the Christian belief that every human is of infinite worth and dignity.

Hotlines: National Human Trafficking Center Toll Free 1-888-373-7888
www.polarisproject.org or www.lost.net
Victims can text: "HELP" or "INFO" to 233733(BE Free)
Greenville, SC: Switch 42.16 www.switch4216.org or 864-350-0281
Homeland Security: Report suspicious activity to 1-866-DHS-2-ICE or 1866-347-2423
www.ice.gov
Summerville, SC: www.Doorstofreedom.org

Printed resources:

- mf* "Understanding and responding to human trafficking" written by Mary Button 2011 available at women.elca@elca.org and it is re-printable by Women of the ELCA units, conferences and synod organizations.
- mf* www.elca.org/justiceforwomen
- mf* The Road of Lost Innocence by Somaly Mam
- mf* Disposable People, by Kevin Bales
- mf* What is the What, by Dave Eggers
- mf* Somebody's Daughter: The Hidden Story of America's Prostituted Children and the Battle to Save Them, by Julian Sher

Movies:

- mf* Born into Brothels
- mf* Children for Sale

Submitted by Mary McKeen

Updates to the Human Trafficking article:

1. Read the ELCA's statement on commercial sexual exploitation at www.elca.org/socialmessages.

2. For information about Cherish All Children, visit www.cherishallchildren.org or go to www.facebook.com/cherishallchildren .

3. Learn more about child sexual exploitation at www.missingkids.com .

Peace, Mary

Background – from the Women of the ELCA Ninth Triennial Convention Program and Reports, page 65

The Women of the ELCA has produced multiple resources about human trafficking. In response to a memorial adopted at the Eighth Triennial Convention, Women of the ELCA published “Understanding and Responding to Human Trafficking,” a resource that defines eight forms of human trafficking, tells the stories of three women who were victims of trafficking, and recommends how individuals and congregations can respond to human trafficking in their community and around the world. It includes a list of books, films, and websites that readers can turn to for further learning and action.

In January 2010, for Global Human Trafficking Awareness Day, the churchwide women’s organization in partnership with the Justice for Women Desk of the ELCA, produced a bulletin insert about human trafficking.

In response to a 2002 Triennial Convention memorial, Women of the ELCA produced “A Day Full of Light: Ending Commercial Sexual Exploitation,” an educational resource describing the harmful impact of sexual exploitation on society and recommending actions to combat it.

The churchwide women’s organization has provided leadership and information on human trafficking through its website, social media and Interchange. The churchwide organization also provides education through the workshops and consultations offered by Inez Torres Davis, director for justice.

Additional resources are available through the website of ELCA Justice for Women and the “End Human Trafficking Campaign” of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

At this Ninth Triennial Convention, half of the convention offering will go to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, which works extensively with victims and persons at risk of human trafficking, and On Eagle’s Wings Ministries, an organization working in North Carolina to restore girls who are victims of domestic sex trafficking, through prevention, outreach, aftercare, and empowerment.

Memorial 1 – Awareness and Prevention of Human Trafficking

Committee recommendations – The committee recommends the following amended memorial:

WHEREAS, human trafficking is the illegal trade in human beings, through abduction, the use or threat of force, deception, fraud, or “sale” for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor.

WHEREAS, human trafficking is a growing problem and each year it is estimated that 2 million people are trafficked worldwide, 27 million people are enslaved around the world and it is a \$9 billion business.

WHEREAS, the number of trafficking victims in the United States is largely unknown, hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizen minors are estimated to be at risk of commercial sexual exploitation.

RESOLVED, that each synodical board convene a committee, in which at least one but no more than half of committee members shall be board members. This committee shall be charged with reviewing resources and helping the synodical organization to promote resources that can help units to inform, educate, and mobilize their congregations and communities, through prayer, ministry and political action.

RESOLVED, that units use this committee and the resources they recommend to inform, educate, and mobilize their congregations and communities, through prayer, ministry and political action.

RESOLVED, that each synodical president report to the 2016 Conference of Presidents about how the recommended committee has functioned in her synodical women’s organization.

Date _____

The Honorable _____

Office Address _____

United States House of Representative/United States Senate

City, State, Zip

Dear _____

As a Woman of the ELCA and a constituent, I urge you to fight modern slavery through passing anti-trafficking legislation in this new session of Congress. Human trafficking is a problem that happens across America every single day. I'm pleased that last year, Congress took steps to fight human trafficking. I encourage you to support all victims by taking these additional steps in 2015:

- Protect workers recruited from abroad by strengthening oversight over foreign labor recruiters.
- Require large companies to report on how they are addressing human trafficking so American consumers can make informed and ethical purchases.
- Increase funding of victims' services and ensure that survivors of exploitation have the support they need. There is not enough federal funding that provides victims with assistance and protection services.

Taking these steps in 2015 would have an enormous impact in the fight against modern slavery. I implore you to turn your focus to these issues as you begin a new Congressional session.

Thank you,

Name

Address

E-Mail

Phone

Date _____

The Honorable _____

Office Address _____

House of Representative/ States Senate

City, State, Zip

Dear _____

I urge you to help the victims of human trafficking through passing/or creating stronger Safe Harbor Laws in our State. Human trafficking is a problem that happens across our state every single day.

Fundamentally, safe harbor laws have two components: legal protection and provision of services. The legal protection component provides immunity from prosecution for certain types of offenses because the child was induced or compelled to commit the offense or an established diversion program that affords a means for charges to be dismissed if the child completes a specialized services program. The services component of safe harbor requires that specialized services be made available to survivors. Services should include medical and psychological treatment, emergency and long-term housing, education assistance, job training, language assistance, and legal services. Ultimately, both components are necessary to reduce trauma and provide a path to recovery.

One of the key safe harbor considerations is whether a state will create immunity from prosecution or create a diversion program. Although experts disagree on which model is best, I believe that the combination of immunity and services provides the most legal protection and goes the furthest to ensure a victim of commercially sexually exploited is entitled to the benefits of a victim.

As a Woman of the ELCA and a constituent, I urge you to help the victims of human trafficking by passing Safe Harbor Laws in our State.

Thank you,

Name

Address

E-Mail

Phone

Date _____

The Honorable _____

Suite _____ Office Building _____

Washington, D.C. 20510

United States Senate

Dear Senator

I urge you to fight modern slavery through passing anti-trafficking legislation in this new session of Congress. Human trafficking is a problem that happens across America every single day. Currently, Senate Bill S 178 Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 is in the Judiciary Committee; I urge you to support this important bill. I'm pleased that last year, Congress took steps to fight human trafficking. I encourage you to support all victims by taking these additional steps in 2015:

- Protect workers recruited from abroad by strengthening oversight over foreign labor recruiters.
- Require large companies to report on how they are addressing human trafficking so American consumers can make informed and ethical purchases.
- Increase funding of victims' services and ensure that survivors of exploitation have the support they need. There is not enough federal funding that provides victims with assistance and protection services.

Taking these steps in 2015 would have an enormous impact in the fight against modern slavery. I implore you to turn your focus to these issues as you begin a new Congressional session.

Thank you,

Name and Address, email address
