



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

July 9, 2014

Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Bruce W. Starr
*Senator
Oregon
President, NCSL*

Thomas W. Wright
*Chief of Staff to Speaker
Alaska
Staff Chair, NCSL*

William T. Pound
Executive Director

RE: S. 1733-“Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act of 2014”

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), we are writing to express support for S. 1733, the “Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act of 2014”. NCSL is the bipartisan national organization that represents the legislatures of our nation's 50 states, its commonwealths and territories.

NCSL applauds your leadership in establishing a mechanism that seeks to eradicate the inhumane practice of human trafficking. We appreciate your effort to reward states that pass legislation that shields trafficking victims from prosecutions and provides services for them by granting incentives on local Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) applications. NCSL commends the creation of the National Human Trafficking Hotline. NCSL also thanks you for the opportunity to collaborate on anti-human trafficking measures with you.

Human trafficking has become an increased concern for many state legislators throughout the country. Awareness of trafficking issues has led to an abundance of state laws since the first law was passed in the state of Washington in 2003. These laws attack the issue in varying ways, from the creation of task forces to study approaches to combating this epidemic to strengthened criminal penalties on traffickers to increased measures that establish services for identified victims. During the 2011, 2012 and 2013 legislative sessions combined, 45 states enacted 221 laws that address human trafficking. At this point in the 2014 legislative sessions, 40 states have considered over 250 anti-trafficking bills and resolutions.

NCSL recognizes that human trafficking has a pervasive and negative state impact across the United States. In response to this growing problem, NCSL was the first national state organization to approve a policy position addressing the issue of human trafficking to raise state awareness and educate state legislatures on best practices. This policy was passed in 2009, was unanimously renewed in 2012 and is contained within our Criminal Justice Policy Directive. The human trafficking portion of this policy directive condemns the act of human trafficking, calls for state/federal partnerships, an increased dialogue between state and federal policymakers, and requests adequate funding for states to deal with the issues confronting victims of these terrible acts. The passage of this policy shows the importance of the issue and that swift action must be taken. The full policy directive is attached.

Denver
7700 East First Place
Denver, Colorado 80230
Phone 303.364.7700 Fax 303.364.7800

Washington
444 North Capitol Street, N.W. Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
Phone 202.624.5400 Fax 202.737.1069

Website www.ncsl.org
Email info@ncsl.org

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In addition to our policy directive, NCSL has spent the last five years increasing awareness and prioritizing the issue of domestic minor sex trafficking through a series of formal educational workshops. These workshops were led and highly attended by state legislators, state legislative staff, federal representatives, and groups that work with victims.

Again, we commend you for your leadership for introducing S. 1733 and want to work with you to advance this important piece of legislation. NCSL believes that this bill respects existing state authority in this area and will support state efforts to eradicate the terrible problem of human trafficking. For additional information, please contact Susan Parnas Frederick (202-624-3566) or Jennifer Arguinzoni (202-624-8691) in NCSL's Washington, D.C. office.

Respectfully,



Assemblyman William Horne, Nevada
Co-Chair, NCSL
Committee on Law and Criminal Justice



Representative Eric Watson, Tennessee
Co-Chair, NCSL
Committee on Law and Criminal Justice