

Chair Prozanski and committee:

Nita Belles, from Bend Oregon and I am here speaking in Support of SB673 and SB 786

I have worked in the anti-trafficking movement for seven years. Currently:

- I am the Central Oregon Regional Director for Oregonians Against Trafficking Humans (OATH), which is an extension of the Oregon Human Trafficking Task Force, lead by Det. Keith Bickford, who is the U.S. Marshall over human trafficking for the state of Oregon.
- I have published a book called *In Our Backyard* which documents human trafficking in the United States.

In working with law enforcement across our state I have heard their frustration and discouragement that they do not have strong enough laws to be able to effectively fight the crime of human trafficking in their jurisdiction. When I train L.E. I ask them, how can I best help you? They say "Work with the legislature to change our laws."

This is happening not only in our big cities but in Central Oregon, in small towns, Prineville, Madras, Sunriver, Black Butte...

The monetary cost to the state for a trafficking victim has been documented to be far greater than the cost of prosecuting and incarceration of a trafficker.

A 2012 study in Minnesota determined that laws and services that prevent DMST return For every ONE dollar spent \$34. Is returned to the system.

- Early intervention of medical problems save the government countless dollars in future treatment of those medical problems, beatings, stabbings, multiple head trauma's, STD's
- Continued counseling, substance abuse treatment
- Many arrests and prosecution of sex-trafficking victims vs one arrest of a trafficker
- Another benefit to the government budget is increased tax revenue available from women who may be more productive in legitimate employment if they have avoided involvement in sex trading. Current laws leave victims with criminal records which inhibit their ability to get many jobs and contribute to tax revenues
- Unfortunately our current laws groom these young victims to be future pimps because they haven't known anything else.

In calculating these facts however, one must consider that traffickers almost 100% of the time traffick multiple victims over the course of their criminal career. One ex-pimp told me over the course of his criminal career he had trafficked 100's of girls. The financial impact of providing necessary services to these victims, not to mention their continued arrests under our current law, is a far greater impact to our states budget than putting that one pimp away in prison.

These two bills, SB673 and SB 786 have many similarities. Might I suggest a work group be brought together to discuss the possible merging of these bills?.

I maintain strong convictions that in Oregon we must strengthen our laws in order to protect our children, and make Oregon a safer place to live.