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Testimony in Support of HB 2205
Wednesday, February 11, 2015
House Committee on Judiciary

Chair Barker, Vice-Chairs Olson and Williamson, and Representatives Barton, Greenlick, Krieger, Lininger, Post and Sprenger:

The Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA), on Hispanic Affairs (OCHA) and the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW) urge passage of HB 2205, *Establishes Fund to End Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*.

The commercial sexual exploitation of children, commonly referred to as sex trafficking of children, is a problem of national concern. The United States Department of Justice and many international agencies and NGOs have recognized the serious nature of the problem and have been pursuing a strategy to fight it for decades. USDOJ, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the International Labor Organization have reported that sex trafficking of children occurs at the local, regional, national, and international levels and involves physical abuse, the production of pornography, prostitution, the promotion of sex tourism for the purpose of sex with children, the use of children in live sex shows, and/or the smuggling of children across borders for those purposes. Although in poorer countries trafficked children are more likely to have been kidnapped, or even sold by their destitute parents in the hope of a better life, in the United States it is more common for children to be abused and sexually exploited by family members and friends, or to be tricked into placing themselves under the control of an exploiter. The trafficking of a child does not necessarily imply that the child is being moved across borders; many children are victimized in their own home states and communities.

The problem is shadowy by its very nature, but it is estimated that in the United States 30% of youth in shelters and 70% of street youth are victims of one or more types of commercial sexual exploitation. Commercial or not, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children states that 20% of US girls and 10% of US boys will be sexually abused or exploited before age 18.

OCAPIA, OCHA and OCFW applaud the Legislature for taking the initiative to create a mechanism to fund services for child sex trafficking survivors, advocacy on their behalf, and measures to prevent and investigate the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and enthusiastically supports HB 2205.

Stephen Ying, OCAPIA Chair

Alberto Moreno, OCHA Chair

Stephanie Vardavas, OCFW Chair

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