



February 23, 2015

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Representative Jeff Barker, Chair
Representative Andy Olson, Vice-Chair
Representative Jennifer Williamson, Vice-Chair
Representative Brent Barton
Representative Mitch Greenlick
Representative Wayne Krieger
Representative Ann Lininger
Representative Bill Post
Representative Sherrie Sprenger

Statement of Support by Linda Smith, Founder and President, Shared Hope International
Washington State Rep. (1983-87), Senator (1987-94), U.S. Congress (1995-99)
Re: SUPPORT OF HB 2908 RELATING TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PREVENTING SEX TRAFFICKING AND
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES ACT OF 2014
DATE: Monday, February 23, 2015
TIME: 3:00 PM
LOCATION: Room HR 343

Dear Committee on Judiciary:

Shared Hope International is an anti-trafficking organization focused on combating the egregious crime of child sex trafficking through comprehensive, victim-centered approaches. By working alongside first responders and policymakers to fight domestic minor sex trafficking, we have found that children from all types of home environments and socioeconomic statuses are vulnerable to the manipulative approaches used by traffickers who pose as boyfriends, recruiters for modeling agencies, and the like.

Shared Hope International provided research to the Congressional Record in support of the Federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act which was enacted in July of 2014 including our National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking commissioned by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2008 which revealed that the number one reason that a trafficked child in the United States does not receive appropriate services is that they are simply not identified. In addition we submitted research findings from our JuST Response (www.sharedhope.org/justresponse) initiative reinforcing that youth involved in the foster care system are particularly at risk for sex trafficking. Requirements outlined in the

Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act are helping to better identification methods and both prevent and strengthen reporting of and service for domestic minor sex trafficking victims.

HB 2908 would provide consistency with federal law and allow youth that have been abused through or vulnerable to the horrific crime of trafficking better access to the identification tools and services they so desperately need. We strongly encourage the committee to support this critical legislation taking a step further toward enabling a cohesive response, effectively designed to ensure that victims of sex trafficking receiving the protections they need and deserve.

Sincerely,



Founder and President, Shared Hope International
Washington State Rep. (1983-87), Senator (1987-94), U.S. Congress (1995-99)