

DATE: February 20, 2017

TO: Honorable Jeff Barker, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: The Junior League of Portland and The Junior League of Eugene

SUBJECT: HB 2740 - Relating to trafficking of persons

Dear Chair Barker and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for hearing House Bill 2740 relating to victims of sex trafficking. The Junior League of Portland expresses its support of HB 2740, increasing the age of trafficked person from 15 to 18 for the crime of trafficking in persons for use in a commercial sex act. The Junior League of Portland has focused on combatting human trafficking in Oregon by spreading awareness through our documentary, *Waiting for the Light: Portland's Sex Trafficking Crisis*, and by advocating for survivors through our annual 'Delicates Drive', which collects crucial garments for survivors.

As this committee knows from previous testimony on related bills, human sex trafficking is rampant across the country and Oregon is a large part of the problem. In the Portland metro area alone, 469 children were identified as victims of commercial sexual exploitation between 2009-2013, as reported by the Department of Human Services and the Sexual Assault Resource Center. This number does not take into consideration the rest of Oregon, adult victims, or the many incidents of sex trafficking that go unreported each day.

The present state of human trafficking in Oregon is not in sync with Oregonian culture. More needs to be done to end this crisis. HB 2740 will support young victims of human trafficking and assist in the prosecution of sex trafficking perpetrators.

HB 2740 supports and protects victims of sex trafficking by increasing the de facto age of trafficked person from 15 to 18 for the crime of trafficking in persons for use in commercial sex acts. The Bill changes the age of a trafficked person from 15 to 18, defining the crime of trafficking in persons, ORS 163.266 (1)(c) to include when "the person knows or recklessly disregards the fact that the other person is under 18 years of age and will be used in a commercial sex act." By changing the age from 15 to 18, Oregon now protects and encompasses the entire range of children impacted by this crime, not just those under 15 years of age. Thus, the Bill will assist in the prosecution of sex trafficking perpetrators and will likely result in higher conviction rates.

MISSION: The Junior League of Portland is an organization committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

FOCUS: The Junior League of Portland joins with community partners to positively impact the education, safety, and health of women, children, and families.

The Junior League of Portland and the Junior League of Eugene have partnered together to form a state public affairs committee, or SPAC, to focus on advocacy efforts surrounding the issue of human trafficking in the state of Oregon. The Junior League of Eugene joins the Junior League of Portland in its support of HB 2740

Victims of sex trafficking are an incredibly vulnerable population due to gaps in Oregon law. HB 2740 creates important and necessary protections and helps victims of sex trafficking find justice. The Junior League of Portland and the Junior League of Eugene urge passage of HB 2740.

Sincerely,

Junior League of Portland and
Junior League of Eugene

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