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June 2, 2015

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Supervisor Applauds Passage of Trafficking Law to Support Victims

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas applauded the passage of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (S. 178), which was recently signed into law by President Barack Obama. The bill includes provisions to strengthen the enforcement, prosecution, and reporting of human trafficking crimes including child sex trafficking.

The new law also increases penalties on persons convicted of trafficking and creates a new fund for financing grants and programs to combat human trafficking and assist its victims, including a newly established grant program to help state and local governments implement such activities.

“There is no such thing as a child prostitute. We need to look at this issue of child sex trafficking for what it is: child abuse,” said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, who has championed the cause against trafficking for several years now. “This is the first federal law that specifically addresses domestic human trafficking and ends impunity for the buyers of child sex. I am grateful to our members of Congress, the advocates, in particular the Human Rights Project for Girls and the survivors, for their hard work in getting this bill passed.”

Los Angeles County is one of the epicenters of trafficking in the nation. This year, the Board of Supervisors approved more than \$6 million in funding to bring more services to victims. In addition, the county has implemented a series of programs and services for victims to receive physical and mental health help, housing and other necessities. More than 7,000 Los Angeles County employees and other professionals have been trained to spot trafficking victims and to alert authorities.

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