

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
AND KATHRYN BARGER**

January 9, 2018

Proclaim January As Human Trafficking Prevention Month

“Trafficking in persons” or “human trafficking” encompasses the acts of recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining a person for compelled labor or commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. According to the International Labor Organization, an estimated 24.9 million victims are trapped in modern-day slavery which generates approximately \$150 billion in illegal profits annually, two-thirds of which is extracted through commercial sexual exploitation. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reports that women and girls comprise 71 percent of human trafficking victims and children comprise more than a quarter of all human trafficking victims worldwide.

Within the United States, there is no official estimate of the total number of human trafficking victims, due to severe under-reporting. Polaris, a national advocacy organization that compiles trafficking data, estimates that the total number of victims nationally reaches into the hundreds of thousands when estimates of both adults and minors and sex trafficking and labor trafficking are aggregated. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has identified thirteen “High Intensity Child Exploitation areas” in the nation, three of which are located in California: San Francisco, San Diego, and Los Angeles. Under federal law, a minor under the age of 18 years who is sexually

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trafficked is a victim of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) regardless of whether or not the exploiter used force, fraud, or coercion. Children and youth are targeted by traffickers, exploited by gangs, and, in some cases, trafficked by the victims' own families. Especially vulnerable to CSEC are runaway and homeless youth, foster youth, LGBTQ youth, and victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse.

In recognition of the significant risks, challenges and burdens human trafficking poses to public safety, law enforcement, health care and social services in Los Angeles County (County), and the unique and special needs and circumstances of CSEC victims, the Board of Supervisors formed the CSEC Integrated Leadership Team (ILT) in order to implement a collaborative approach to identifying and rescuing victims, arresting and prosecuting traffickers and exploiters, and reducing demand by increasing the risk to those who believe it is acceptable to buy children for sex. The CSEC ILT joined the Los Angeles Countywide CSEC Steering Committee and the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force in the coordination of efforts among the Departments of Children and Family Services, Probation, Health Services, Public Health, Mental Health, Sheriff's Department, District Attorney, County Counsel, Office of Child Protection, Superior Court, Los Angeles County Office of Education, Los Angeles Police Department, Children's Law Center, and community partners to provide ongoing oversight and leadership to ensure high-quality services to trafficking victims, especially children and youth who are at-risk of or experiencing CSEC.

In 2007, the U.S. Senate designated January 11 as Human Trafficking Awareness Day. On January 4, 2010, President Obama issued a proclamation declaring January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. To commemorate these occasions, County departments and several of the County's community partners in the fight against human trafficking are hosting free events, convenings, and trainings to raise awareness of how to prevent, identify, and report instances of human trafficking.

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WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

- 1) Proclaim January 2018 as “Human Trafficking Prevention Month” in Los Angeles County (County) and encourage members of the public and interested County employees to visit <https://www.lacounty.gov/human-trafficking> to register for and attend community and County-sponsored events that raise awareness of trafficking and impart information on how to identify, prevent and report human trafficking crimes; and
- 2) Designate January 11, 2018 as “Human Trafficking Awareness Day” by encouraging County employees to voluntarily engage in County-sponsored training and other educational opportunities to learn how to identify and report signs of human trafficking and understand how to access County and community resources for victims and survivors.

(ECW)