



RICK GUNDRUM

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 58TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Assembly Bill 973

Assembly Committee on Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities |
January 24, 2024 | GAR Hall

Chair Petryk, Vice-Chair Michalski, and honorable members of the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities. Thank you for taking the time to give Assembly Bill 973 a public hearing. This bill comes out of the bipartisan Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking. Following the Task Force's four informational hearings last year, members of both parties began working on bill drafts to find ways to reduce human trafficking in Wisconsin.

During the bill drafting stage, I learned that Representative Shelia Stubbs and I shared similar priorities on human trafficking as far as it relates to education and prevention. I am of the belief that one way we can reduce human trafficking in Wisconsin is through educating people who work in industries that are likely to interact with the public and vulnerable individuals.

One area where I learned there were problems with human trafficking was in community-based residential facilities (CBRFs). This was brought up by the Milwaukee Police Department where officers have said they've experienced issues with CBRFs due to a lack of local oversight that prevents law enforcement from taking the initiative. One way to improve this is by requiring employees who have regular contact with facility residents to receive training on identifying and prevention of human trafficking crimes.

CBRFs, however, are not the only area where people could be exposed to human trafficking. There are a number of industries that could have these issues. The Department of Workforce Development will determine what employers will provide training regarding identifying human trafficking based how likely they are to interact with the public. We also highlight private security officers, hotel and motel managers, public transit managers, and adult entertainment managers within AB 973.

In order to stop human trafficking in Wisconsin, the key is for people to know what to look for as far as human trafficking. That is what this bill aims to achieve. I am thankful to have worked with Representative Stubbs, State Senator Dan Knodl, and Task Force Chair Jerry O'Connor on AB 973 and I am happy to take questions at this time. I will finish by saying that I do anticipate amendments to this bill when hearing from stakeholders and I am open to that discussion.



WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Shelia Stubbs

77TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

January 24, 2024

Assembly Bill 973—Relating to: mandatory training regarding human trafficking for employees of community-based residential facilities and owners of certain entities and certain other employees and granting rule-making authority.

Assembly Committee on Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities

Good morning Chairman Representative Warren Petryk, Vice Chairman Representative Tom Michalski, and Members of the Assembly Committee on Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony in support of Assembly Bill 973—relating to: mandatory training regarding human trafficking for employees of community-based residential facilities and owners of certain entities and certain other employees and granting a rule-making authority.

First, I would like to thank Representative Rick Gundrum and Senator Daniel Knodl for their work on this bipartisan bill, which was recommended for introduction by the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking. Of the 11 pieces of legislation introduced by this task force, I am proud to say that 8 have bipartisan authorship. The intense partnership between representatives of both parties on these bills underscores how dire the issue of human trafficking is in our state, as well as how determined we are as a legislature to tackle this crisis.

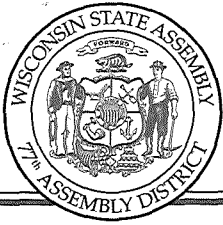
I am here to express and encourage support for AB 973, as I believe it has the ability to save the lives of trafficking victims right here in our state of Wisconsin. Under current law, there are no requirements for employees, outside of previously designated mandatory reporters, to undergo any sort of training on the identification or prevention of human trafficking. This needs to change.

Though it may seem invisible at times, sex and labor trafficking is a massive issue in the state of Wisconsin. In fact, Wisconsin currently has a grade of "F" in addressing child and youth sex trafficking, according to the Shared Hope International Institute for Justice and Advocacy. Under a comprehensive analysis and assessment of our legislative framework, the non-profit agency recognized numerous gaps in our states statutes for a victim-centered, evidence-based approach. Many of these gaps resulted from improper or inadequate training for those interacting with trafficked victims, such as law enforcement, juvenile agencies and schools. It is past time that we do better as a state. We must protect our neighbors from trafficking, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Assembly Bill 973 would require any employee of a community-based residential facility who has regular, direct contact with facility residents to receive training on identifying and preventing human trafficking crimes within 60 days after starting employment and at least every two years thereafter. This bill would also require employers to provide, within 60 days of an employee's hire and at least every two years thereafter, training on identifying and preventing human

STATE CAPITOL / P.O. Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708

TELEPHONE / (608) 266-3784 TOLL FREE / (888) 534-0077 EMAIL / rep.stubbs@legis.wisconsin.gov



WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Shelia Stubbs

77TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

trafficking crimes to employees who are likely to interact with the public and vulnerable individuals. Under the bill, the training must be provided, at a minimum, to private security officers, hotel and motel owners and managers, public transit managers, and adult entertainment establishment owners and managers.

Without proper education on the identification and prevention of human trafficking, this horrific crime is able to hide in plain sight. Assembly Bill 973 will ensure that mandatory human trafficking training will be implemented in areas such as hospitality, public transit, adult entertainment and more. With the increased awareness and knowledge this training provides, individuals employed in high-contact industries will be better equipped to recognize the inconspicuous signs of human trafficking and report cases of commercial exploitation.

As state legislators, we have a responsibility to protect our community members, especially those who are most vulnerable. The creation of the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking was just the beginning of our work to protect and aid trafficking survivors, current victims of trafficking, and those who are at most risk of being trafficked. By bringing forth bills such as Assembly Bill 973, we are taking tangible steps to save lives. Though there is much more work to be done to eradicate human trafficking in Wisconsin, providing mandatory training for those likely to interact with victims is an essential first step in addressing this crisis.

I greatly appreciate your time and thank you for your consideration to support AB 973. I believe this piece of legislation holds an opportunity for our state to actively fight commercial exploitation by empowering those who are most likely to encounter trafficking situations. I hope you have become better informed on how this bill will increase the chances of identifying exploitation, prevention trafficking, and saving victims in our state. I ask you to please vote yes on AB 973. I am happy to answer any questions.

STATE CAPITOL / P.O. Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708

TELEPHONE / (608) 266-3784 TOLL FREE / (888) 534-0077 EMAIL / rep.stubbs@legis.wisconsin.gov



To: Members of the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities
Rep. Petryk, Chairman

From: Kathi Kilgore, WHLA Contract Lobbyist

Date: January 24, 2024

Re: Support for Assembly Bill 973 Relating to: mandatory training regarding human trafficking for employees of community-based residential facilities and owners of certain entities and certain other employees and granting rule-making authority.

As January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, I'm happy to be here on behalf of approximately 600 members of the Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association, including hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfasts, and all of the businesses that support our industry, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Assembly Bill 973, which would require training for owners and managers of Wisconsin's hotels and motels. We are here today in support of this bill; however, we are asking for the opportunity to work with you to make the bill more robust, more straightforward, and more effective.

Wisconsin's lodging industry has been proactively working to fight human trafficking for years, and we have invested quite an amount of time and resources into the effort. Through the American Hotel & Lodging Association Foundation's No Room for Trafficking initiative, we support the free distribution of industry-standard courses effectively designed to help eradicate human trafficking from the lodging industry. The first course, "Your Role in Preventing Human Trafficking: Recognize the Signs," is available in 17 different languages and can be delivered online or in person. The second, "Recognize and Respond: Addressing Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Industry," builds on the foundation of the first course and provides increased guidance on responding to potential trafficking situations. This program has a 60-minute module for associates and an 80-minute module for managers. It is delivered online and is available in Spanish, English, Chinese, Arabic, and French.

Additionally, all major brands (i.e., Marriott, Hilton, Wyndham) and the flags they represent (i.e., Fairfield Inn & Suites, DoubleTree, Super 8) have mandated human trafficking training for all of their properties throughout the United States. In Wisconsin, that means we have about 700 lodging properties with employees who have already been trained in Human Trafficking awareness and response.

We tell you this to underscore our commitment to the cause of eradicating human trafficking from our lodging facilities. Through industry experience, we would recommend consideration of the following changes:

- 1) **Types of Properties:** We know that human trafficking can occur in any type of lodging facility, not just hotels and motels. We encourage you to adopt a bill that would incorporate these requirements for all lodging establishments, including campgrounds, bed and breakfasts, tourist rooming houses, and short-term rentals (i.e., Airbnb).
- 2) **Training of Property "Owners":** While we certainly have no opposition to this concept, the implementation and interpretation may cause complications as many hotels are owned by large companies, Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), etc. that do not work directly on a property like an owner operator would. We would recommend considering terms like "Principal Entity" and "Site Entity" to provide clarity.

- 3) **Identifying Traffickers:** While the outlined training requirements include guidance on how to identify individuals who are most at risk for human trafficking, our current training also includes guidance on how to **identify the signs of trafficking and individuals potentially engaged in the act of trafficking**. This is an important part of the training process, as employees do not always see the individuals being trafficked. We may want to consider including this piece of training in the bill.
- 4) **Contact Information:** The training modules that have already been developed for our industry teach people to contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Under this bill, the training needs to include "...the toll-free telephone number of the National Human Trafficking Hotline and the telephone numbers of the appropriate local law enforcement agencies." If we were to change the text to "...National Human Trafficking Hotline **or** the telephone numbers of the appropriate local law enforcement agencies..." we would protect the free training modules that are currently available to all Wisconsin lodging properties. If specific requirements exist for each municipality, the properties must pay fees to have their training customized. Without a change in this provision, we may actually be training fewer people in Wisconsin's lodging industry instead of more.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to discuss this important topic, and we look forward to having the opportunity to work with you to get an effective bill over the finish line before the end of this session.



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TO: Members, Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
Members, Committee on Workforce Development & Economic Opportunities
Members, Committee on Jobs, Economy, and Small Business

FROM: David Earleywine, Associate Director

DATE: January 24, 2024

RE: Support for AB-970, AB-971, AB-972, AB-973, AB-974, AB-976, AB-978,
AB-979, AB-980, AB-981, Human Trafficking

On behalf of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of the bishops of Wisconsin, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the following bills being heard in this and other Assembly committees today:

AB-970, Sex Offender Registration for Certain Crimes
AB-971, Human Trafficking of Adults at Risk for the Purpose of Commercial Sex Acts
AB-972, Solicitation for Prostitution and Providing a Penalty
AB-973, Mandatory Training Regarding Human Trafficking
AB-974, Civil Cause of Action for Human Trafficking and Trafficking a Child
AB-976, Testimony of a Child in a Criminal Proceeding for a Human Trafficking Crime
AB-978, Creation of a Human Trafficking Council
AB-979, Human Trafficking Victim Services Grant Program
AB-980, Displaying a Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline Poster
AB-981, Instruction on Human Trafficking in Certain Specialty Schools (Barbering)

Human trafficking constitutes one of the gravest offenses against basic human rights and dignity. It preys upon the most vulnerable men, women, and children, who are frequently coerced into performing the most degrading forms of human labor. It denies everything that a civilized society stands for and that Catholic social teaching espouses: the protection of human dignity and human rights; the preferential option for the poor; the call to family and community; the rights of workers; and solidarity.

As of 2022, it is estimated that over 27 million people are victims of human trafficking.¹ This can take the form of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, coerced and forced labor, child soldiers, and more. That number includes more than 3.3 million children. In

¹ International Labour Organization, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, (September 2022)
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_854733.pdf



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Wisconsin specifically, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reports nearly 800 cases involving over 1,600 victims with the vast majority suffering from sex trafficking.²

The Catholic Church, along with other religious and secular institutions, is involved in combating human trafficking both nationally and internationally. In the U.S., the Catholic Coalition Against Human Trafficking, which consists of about twenty Catholic organizations, was one of the groups that helped draft the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and its subsequent reauthorizations.³ Catholic women religious have been at the forefront of anti-trafficking work.⁴ They and countless other lay Catholics reach out directly to persons who are being trafficked to help with housing, transportation, childcare, employment, etc. In Milwaukee, the newly established St. Bakhita House, in partnership with Franciscan Peacemakers Clare Community, provides supportive community housing for women who are seeking to escape sex trafficking. Across Wisconsin, among people of every faith, awareness is growing that sex trafficking is destroying lives and wreaking havoc on families and communities.

The WCC, therefore, applauds the Speaker and those involved with the bipartisan task force for bringing forward these bills. These bills strive to give victims of human trafficking some hope that they will be delivered from their bondage and help prevent others from being ensnared in this violent and degrading world. We strongly urge the Legislature to pass these bills.

² Spectrum News 1, *How big of a problem is sex trafficking in Wisconsin?* (April 24, 2023) <https://spectrumnews1.com/wi/milwaukee/news/2023/04/19/part-1--how-big-of-a-problem-is-sex-trafficking-in-wisconsin->

³ The Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAH) <https://www.usccb.org/offices/anti-trafficking-program/coalition-catholic-organizations-against-human-trafficking>

⁴ U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking: <https://sistersagainsttrafficking.org>

Registering in favor AB973



Wisconsin State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police



PO Box 206 West Bend, WI 53095

Ryan Windorff
President

Mark Sette
Vice President

Shane Wrucke
Secretary

Randy Winkler
Treasurer

Tim Toth
Second Vice President

Sean Marschke
Sergeant at Arms

Don Kapla
Immediate Past President

Jerry Johnson
National Trustee

January 24, 2024

Wisconsin Fraternal Order of Police Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 973

Assembly Committee on Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities

My name is Ryan Windorff, and I am the President of the Wisconsin State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police. The Fraternal Order of Police is the world's largest organization of sworn law enforcement officers, with more than 367,000 members in more than 2,200 lodges. The Wisconsin State Lodge proudly represents more than 3,200 members in 32 lodges throughout the state. We are the voice off those who dedicate their lives to protecting and serving our communities. We are committed to improving the working conditions of law enforcement officers and the safety of those we serve through education, legislation, information, community involvement and employee representation.

Human trafficking is a serious issue that affects many individuals across the world, including in Wisconsin. Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery that involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. Individuals of all ages and genders are at risk of being trafficked. Victims of human trafficking often come from vulnerable populations, including those who have experienced poverty, homelessness, or domestic violence.

The state of Wisconsin has taken steps to combat human trafficking, including passing legislation to increase penalties for those convicted of trafficking and providing training for law enforcement and service providers to better identify and assist victims. The Wisconsin Department of Justice also operates a human trafficking hotline for individuals to report suspected instances of trafficking. Despite these efforts, human trafficking remains an ongoing issue in Wisconsin and across the country. It is important that we continue to raise awareness and take action to prevent these crimes and support victims.

This bill requires any employee of a community-based residential facility who has regular, direct contact with facility residents to receive training on identifying and preventing human trafficking crimes. The bill also requires employers to provide training on identifying and preventing human trafficking crimes to employees who are likely to interact with the public and vulnerable individuals. Under the bill, the training must be provided, at a minimum, to private security officers, hotel and motel owners and managers, public transit managers, and adult entertainment establishment owners and managers. These individuals, by the very nature of the crime of human trafficking, are more likely to encounter victims in their daily duties.



Wisconsin State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police



PO Box 206 West Bend, WI 53095

Ryan Windorff
President

Mark Sette
Vice President

Shane Wrucke
Secretary

Randy Winkler
Treasurer

Tim Toth
Second Vice President

Sean Marschke
Sergeant at Arms

Don Kapla
Immediate Past President

Jerry Johnson
National Trustee

It is important for community members to work with law enforcement to combat human trafficking. Human trafficking is a complex issue that requires a coordinated effort from multiple sectors, including law enforcement, service providers, and community members. Community members can play a crucial role in identifying instances of trafficking. They may be more likely to notice suspicious activity in their neighborhoods or workplaces and can report these suspicions to law enforcement or service providers. Additionally, victims of human trafficking often do not come forward due to fear of retaliation or lack of trust in law enforcement. By working together, we can better identify instances of trafficking, provide support to victims, and hold traffickers accountable for their crimes.

This legislation is crucial in the fight against human trafficking. This training will equip employees with the necessary skills to recognize the signs of trafficking and take appropriate action.

On behalf of the members of the Wisconsin Fraternal Order of Police, we fully support this legislation and believe that it is an important step in the fight against human trafficking. It is essential that we take action to protect vulnerable individuals and prevent these heinous crimes from occurring.

Sincerely,

Ryan Windorff
President