

## Legislation Text

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Recognizing the Efforts of Philadelphians to Elevate Awareness of Human Trafficking in the Month of January.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has a tradition of advancing fundamental human rights; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative to eliminate human trafficking, including early or forced marriage, commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, labor obtained through debt bondage, involuntary servitude, slavery, and slavery by descent; and

WHEREAS, To combat human trafficking in this City, the people of Philadelphia must be aware of the realities of human trafficking and must be dedicated to stopping this contemporary manifestation of slavery; and

WHEREAS, Human traffickers use many physical and psychological techniques to control their victims, including the use of violence or threats of violence against the victim or the victim's family, isolation from the public, isolation from the victim's family and religious or ethnic communities, language and cultural barriers, shame, control of the victim's possessions, confiscation of passports and other identification documents and threats of arrest, deportation, or imprisonment if the victim attempts to reach out for assistance or leave; and

WHEREAS, Victims of human trafficking need support in order to escape and to recover from the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual trauma associated with their victimization; and

WHEREAS, Although laws to prosecute perpetrators of human trafficking and to assist and protect victims of human trafficking have been enacted in the United States, awareness of the issues surrounding human trafficking by those people most likely to come into contact with victims is essential for effective enforcement because the techniques that traffickers use to keep their victims enslaved severely limit self-reporting; and

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WHEREAS, The effort by individuals, businesses, organizations and governing bodies to promote the observance of "National Human Trafficking Awareness Month" in January of each year represents one of the many examples of the ongoing commitment to raise awareness of and to actively oppose human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphians of all stripes were willing and able participants in National Human Trafficking Awareness Month events and programming; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Commission for Women observed National Human Trafficking Awareness Day on January 11, 2018 by launching a drive to collect personal items for survivors of sex trafficking. Executive Director Jovida Hill articulated the importance of the effort, stating "Though chattel slavery may have ended in

the 19th Century, we must remain as committed abolitionists to erase all forms of exploitation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in all of its ugly manifestations”; and

WHEREAS, Women Organized Against Rape organized its Second Annual Clothing & Toiletry Drive to support the Salvation Army’s Anti-Human Trafficking Program. The Salvation Army’s Drop-In Shelter for Women has a program dedicated to creating a safe, trauma-informed, welcoming and non-judgmental space for women suffering from sex trafficking and commercial sex exploitation in Philadelphia; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize the efforts of Philadelphians to elevate awareness for human trafficking in the month of January.