

Legislation Text

File #: 200100, **Version:** 0

Recognizing January as “National Human Trafficking Awareness Month” in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery that occurs both within the United States and around the world; and

WHEREAS, Victims of human trafficking are subjected to force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of commercial sex, debt bondage, or forced labor; and

WHEREAS, Human Traffickers use violence, threats, blackmail, false promises, deception, manipulation, and debt bondage to trap the most vulnerable individuals in horrible situations; and

WHEREAS, Research into specific numbers related to human trafficking in Philadelphia are difficult to obtain because victims are often reluctant to or prohibited from coming forward; and

WHEREAS, The FBI’s National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database lists 424,066 missing children under the age of 18 in 2018, the most recent year statistics were available. About 37 percent of those children were black, even though black children make up only 14 percent of all children in the United States. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that about 20 percent of missing children are Hispanic or Latino; and

WHEREAS, Although African American women make up only 7 percent of the United States population, they account for 10 percent of all missing persons cases throughout the country. The Black and Missing Foundation puts the total number of disappeared black women and girls last year around 64,000; and

WHEREAS, A 2015 study published in the William and Mary Journal of Race, Gender, and Social Justice stated that although black children accounted for approximately 35 percent of missing children that year, they only amounted to 7 percent of media references; and

WHEREAS, Researchers from the Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research at the University of Pennsylvania visited three major U.S. cities including Philadelphia and interviewed 270 homeless youth, finding that 20 percent were victims of human trafficking including 17 percent who were victims of sex trafficking and 6 percent who were victims of labor trafficking. 14 percent of the youths interviewed claimed they had engaged in “survival sex” a moniker for trading sex for basic needs such as food, shelter, etc; and

WHEREAS, A 2019 report published by the Villanova Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation showed that many victims of human trafficking; 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

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; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Recognizes January as “National Human Trafficking Awareness Month” in Philadelphia.