Human Trafficking & the 87th Session

children at Risk

SB 316 (Huffman) I HB 390 (S. Thompson)

Empower Hotel & Motel Employees to Identify and Safely Report Human Trafficking

Potential human trafficking victims encounter the hospitality industry daily—whether they are forced to engage in commercial sex, seek safe refuge after fleeing their trafficker, live temporarily on-site, or are being trafficked out of a motel or hotel. Traffickers are able to use the hospitality industry to conduct criminal operations to an astonishing degree because hotel and motel employees do not have the training to recognize sex or labor trafficking.

A national survey of sex trafficking survivors shows the shocking extent to which human trafficking victims encounter the hospitality industry. [i]

- **80%** of the respondents reported engaging in commercial sex at a hotel or motel
- **20%** were housed at a hotel or motel
- **69%** reported that hotels or motels were used during travel

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Require sufficient training to ensure that hotel employees can spot and safely report suspected human trafficking occurring on the premises, with oversight from the Office of the Attorney General. HB 390 will result in more victims being rescued, more efficient use of law enforcement resources, and reduced civil liability for hotel operators by reducing human trafficking in their establishments.

The requirements of HB 390 are reasonable, adequate training time is allotted, and the positive impact will be tremendous.

- Hotel operators must provide training to each employee on how to identify human trafficking activities and victims and how to report suspected trafficking safely.
- The training has a 20-minute minimum, and new hires must receive training within 30 days.
- The training must include: A general overview on human trafficking, information on how to identify individuals at risk, the difference between sex and labor trafficking within the hotel industry, and how to report to the National Human Trafficking Hotline and local law enforcement.
- Free online training sessions are already available in English and Spanish.

HB 390's proactive approach is consistent with Texas' goal of increasing victim identification and helps Texas and our hospitality industry by making it harder for pimps and traffickers to use hotels and motels to house, transport and sell victims.

[i] On-Ramps, Intersections, and Exit Routes: A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking: Hotels and Motels, (2018).

CHILDREN AT RISK
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