



Sunset Advisory Commission Texas Workforce Commission

August 12, 2026

Sunset Advisory Commission: Anti-Human Trafficking comments for Texas Workforce Commission

Chairwoman Kolkhorst, Vice Chair Hull and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Mandi Kimball, and I serve as Vice President at Children at Risk. Children At Risk is a nonpartisan research and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for Texas children and families.

Children At Risk appreciates the Sunset staff's thoughtful review of TWC and its focus on accountability, local workforce board oversight, performance measurement, technology, and cross-system coordination. We encourage the Commission to build on these recommendations by strengthening how TWC serves survivors of human trafficking.

For survivors, employment is more than a paycheck; it is a pathway to long-term safety, stability, and independence, yet many survivors face significant barriers to entering and remaining in the workforce, including interrupted education, housing instability, trauma, limited work history, justice-system or foster care involvement, and difficulty obtaining identification and other employment documents.

Recovery cannot be achieved through isolated programs alone. Survivors often interact with multiple systems including workforce, education, child welfare, behavioral health, housing, victim services, and community-based organizations—yet these systems are not always coordinated. A stronger workforce strategy can improve access to employment, strengthen transitions between services, and support long-term economic stability.

To better understand these challenges, Children At Risk conducted focus groups with trafficking survivors, nonprofit providers, workforce partners, and state and local agency representatives

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across rural, suburban, and urban communities throughout Texas. Despite differences in local resources and approaches, participants consistently identified the same challenges: inconsistent workforce practices, fragmented referrals, limited coordination, and barriers to accessing education, training, and employment.

Recommendations:

Based on these findings, Children At Risk respectfully recommends that the Sunset Advisory Commission direct TWC to:

1. Designate a representative within each Local Workforce Development Board to coordinate services, support workforce staff, and serve as a primary point of contact for survivors and community partners.
2. Reduce barriers to employment by simplifying access to workforce services, helping survivors obtain identification and employment documents, and connecting them with supportive services that promote long-term success.
3. Strengthen partnerships with community organizations and employers to improve referrals, coordinate supportive services, expand employment opportunities, and promote trauma-informed workplace practices.

Texas has invested significantly in preventing human trafficking, supporting survivors, and strengthening victim services. The next step is ensuring survivors also have a clear pathway to education, workforce training, and family-sustaining employment.

Long-term recovery depends on economic stability. By improving coordination, expanding workforce supports, reducing barriers to employment, strengthening employer partnerships, and measuring meaningful outcomes, Texas can help survivors build safe, stable, and independent futures.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mandi Kimball

Vice President of Children at Risk