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Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 179

**Presented to the Senate Judiciary Committee
By Assistant Attorney General Pat Colloton
Chair, Human Trafficking Advisory Board**

March 7, 2017

Chairman Wilborn and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 179.

The Human Trafficking Advisory Board (HTAB) is composed of representatives from law enforcement agencies across Kansas, victim service representatives, state agencies and a legislator, judge, prosecutor, medical experts and survivors of human trafficking. Its purpose is to create policies that coordinate efforts across the state to combat human trafficking. It is my honor to have served as chair of this board since 2013.

In 2013 the Legislature passed a comprehensive bill to address human trafficking in Kansas and HTAB was statutorily established to further the goals of this legislation. A fundamental goal in the legislation was to recognize that those who are trafficked are victims and to create a path for them to recover from the harms done to them. For child sex trafficking, a responsibility was placed on law enforcement to recover these children as CINC's (Child in Need of Care) who are entitled to specially designated services under the state's child protective services.

The Attorney General was tasked with coordinating training for law enforcement to help recover trafficked children. More than 5,000 law enforcement officers have received training since 2013 under a protocol developed and kept updated by the HTAB. Many victim service agencies across the state have been given training on an identification tool developed in coordination with HTAB that has been used to identify and assist more than 1,000 victims in the past three years. The Attorney General's office, in coordination with HTAB members, has provided more than 100 public awareness and prevention presentations to civic and church groups, medical training in hospitals, school training for counselors and resource officers, judicial training coordinated with the Office of Judicial Administration, Continuing Legal Education (CLE) training for attorneys and a special program with Truckers Against Trafficking.

Working through the issues related to prosecuting traffickers for their crimes, prosecuting the buyers who create the demand for victims, and helping victims recover and reestablish a normal

life, several legislative changes would be very helpful. SB 179 contains changes that each aim to improve our coordinated efforts to combat trafficking and to provide a path for victim recovery. As Chair of HTAB, I can assure you these changes in the law will improve our ability to reach the goals the Legislature has set to address the predations of human trafficking in Kansas.

I strongly urge your adoption of SB 179.