



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0349, **Version:** 2

Clerk 09/15/2021

A MOTION calling on the executive to support efforts to combat human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children through a public awareness campaign.

WHEREAS, human trafficking is thought by some to be modern-day form of slavery in which people profit from the control and exploitation of others, and

WHEREAS, as defined under federal law, victims of human trafficking include children involved in commercial sex trade, adults age eighteen or over who are coerced or deceived into commercial sex acts, and anyone forced into different forms of "labor or services," such as domestic workers held in a home, or farm workers forced to provide their labor against their will, and

WHEREAS, human trafficking is considered to be one of the fastest-growing criminal industries in the world, and

WHEREAS, human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children are serious crime problems on a worldwide basis, in Washington state and in King County, and

WHEREAS, the average age of entry into commercial sexual exploitation in the United States is between twelve and fourteen years old, and

WHEREAS, children as young as eleven years old have been commercially sexually exploited in King County, and

WHEREAS, over ninety-five percent of labor and sex trafficking victims experience physical and sexual violence, and

WHEREAS, Washington state has been described as a focal point for the recruitment, transportation and sale of people for labor, due in part to its abundance of ports, proximity to an international border, vast rural areas and dependency on agricultural workers, and

WHEREAS, Washington state was the first state to criminalize human trafficking, in 2003, and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the Metro transit department began participating in the Safe Place program to assist at-risk youth in finding support and services, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Legislature has continued to pass strong anti-trafficking laws, making Washington state a model for comprehensive anti-human-trafficking laws, and

WHEREAS, in 2018 King County worked with private companies and other local agencies, including the Port of Seattle and the city of Seattle, as well as airline companies, to launch a Stop Human Trafficking campaign, which aimed to: raise public awareness about the nature of human trafficking, how and where it occurs locally and how to prevent and stop it; and help identify victims and survivors and promote access to services, and decrease demand through awareness, and

WHEREAS, following this public awareness campaign, Washington state has the eighth-highest call volume to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in 2019, an increase from being the thirteenth-highest state in 2018;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. It is the intent of the King County council to continue King County's work to raise awareness and combat human trafficking, in collaboration with businesses, organizations and all levels of government, including the statewide public awareness campaign to commence January 2022.

B. The King County executive is requested to continue to support the efforts of the statewide public awareness campaign to prevent human trafficking. The public awareness campaign should include, but not be limited to, posting anti-human-trafficking public awareness materials in key transit corridors, the interior and exterior of buses, transit centers and county-managed buildings and locations where public awareness of

human trafficking could have an impact. The campaign should begin no later than January 15, 2022, and extend through at least March 15, 2022.