



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION CALLING FOR HEARINGS CONCERNING THE RISE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CHICAGO

WHEREAS, The Scottish poet, Robert Burns famed 1784 phrase, "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn" can well summate the cruel and tragic consequences that the practice human trafficking has had on mankind through the annals of history; and ,

WHEREAS, Whether called slavery of any kind, indentured servitude, or human smuggling, human trafficking has brought untold misery upon not only the victims but also their families and the communities wherein they lived; and

WHEREAS, Whether those individuals submit to being trafficked voluntarily, semi-voluntarily or against their will, they are victims of that consequential inhumanity that precludes recorded history; and

WHEREAS, Although slavery certainly existed before the 1400s, this epoch marked the start of Portuguese slave trading with the transporting of Africans to Portugal for use as slaves. The British started African slave trading in 1562. Throughout the 1600s, the slave trade flourished in countries like Spain, North America, Holland, France, Sweden, and Denmark; and

WHEREAS, At the beginning of the 20th Century, various governments began to take action in an attempt to curb some of human trafficking's most nefarious practices. The United Kingdom, India, Germany, Prussia, Belgian, Denmark, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland signed an International Agreement for the Suppression of White Slave Traffic in 1904 to curb the trafficking of women for the purposes of prostitution; and

WHEREAS, Although human trafficking takes on many forms, the highest profile and the most insidious is the transporting and selling of individuals for forced prostitution. In 1932, the Japanese forced thousands of Asian women into the notorious "comfort stations" for their military personnel; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, the United Nations held their Fourth World Conference to address the issue of trafficking women, recognizing it as an act of violence against women, defining actions to be taken including enforcing international conventions on trafficking and human slavery, addressing factors that encourage trafficking, setting up effective law enforcement and institutions to eliminate trafficking both nationally and internationally, and implementing programs including educational and rehabilitation institutions to provide for the social, medical, and psychological needs to victims of trafficking; and

WHEREAS, Today, Illinois has legislation in place that defines victims of human trafficking to include children involved in the sex trade, adults age 18 or over who are coerced or deceived into commercial sex acts, as well as anyone forced into different forms of "labor or services," such as domestic workers held in a home, or farm-workers forced to labor against their will. The factors that each of these situations have in common are elements of force, fraud, or coercion that are used to control people; and

WHEREAS, As this nation's transportation hub, it behooves this august body to investigate this city's response to the heinous effects of this societal scourge and fashion appropriate action in lieu of its findings; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the Mayor and members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered together this 8th Day of May, 2013 AD, do hereby request a hearing by a joint committee of public safety and human relations to gather expert testimony and public comment for the purpose of formulating a course of action to ameliorate the conditions that allow human trafficking to incubate and thrive in any of its insidious forms.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That suitable copies of this resolution be prepared and presented to the Honorable

James A. Balcer, chairman of the committee on public safety and the Honorable Joe Moore, chairman of the committee on human relations / . „ _/

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