

HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Missouri is at the crossroads of the human trafficking crisis. There is a myriad of legislation that the State of Missouri needs to enact in order to effectively combat human trafficking. NCJW has narrowed in on four pieces of potential legislation that are especially crucial.

Make it against the law to destroy, conceal, or remove someone else's identifying documents.

Currently, it is not against the law to take someone's passport from them and destroy it. In several states across the country, any person who engages in this form of exploitation will be faced with a Class 5 Felony; Missouri is not one of those states. This legislation is absolutely necessary to protect from labor trafficking, and it currently exists in 9 states.

Require the posting of the national human trafficking hotline.

Hotlines can be used to provide referrals for victims seeking assistance, as a mechanism to provide tips to law enforcement, and to provide general information about human trafficking to the public. More than 25 states require or encourage a hotline number to be posted in establishments including, but not limited to, restaurants, adult entertainment venues, train and bus stations, highway truck stops and rest stops, hospitals, courts, and urgent care centers. Missouri does not currently have this requirement.

Define Safe Harbor laws better in order to ensure that minors are treated appropriately.

Child victims of human trafficking are forced, induced, or coerced into providing labor, services, or commercial sex. A trafficked child may be compelled to engage in illegal activities and, instead of being treated as victims, many are treated as criminals and are prosecuted accordingly.

Vacate convictions for trafficking and trafficking-related offenses for survivors.

Survivors who were forced into crimes should be allowed to have convictions cleared from their records, avoiding the lifelong burden of having a criminal record. A criminal record creates a very real barrier for individuals seeking employment, education, housing loans, and a host of other services. A clean record will enable survivors to have a second chance at life. So far, 18 states have these statutes. Missouri would be 19.

What to Do Next:

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month!

NCJW Trafficking Lobby Day:

January 18, 2017

NCJW Trafficking Lunch and Learn:

January 19, 2017

NCJW Trafficking Task Force Meeting:

February 1, 2017

State Trafficking Awareness Lobby Day:

January 25, 2017



National Council of Jewish Women
St. Louis Section