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**PREPARED TESTIMONY OF JULIE BRAUN, POLICY ADVISOR, OFFICE OF
CRIMES VICTIM SERVICES**

**Testimony on Senate Bill 444 / Assembly Bill 540
Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
Tuesday, February 6, 2018**

Madam Chair and committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Julie Braun. I am a policy advisor at the Wisconsin Department of Justice in the Office of Crime Victim Services. I am here today to speak in support of Senate Bill 444/Assembly Bill 540.

As you know, the Department of Justice has been very involved in the fight against human trafficking through enforcement efforts, by co-chairing the State Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force and through work with victim service providers. We are also conducting targeted industry outreach to engage sectors of the workforce positioned to SEE, RECOGNIZE and REPORT signs of human trafficking.

Law enforcement can't be everywhere. One of the biggest opportunities we have in this fight is to remove the strategic advantage enjoyed by traffickers when members of the public do not recognize the crime of human trafficking for what it really is. On January 19th, in partnership with the Department of Children and Families and the Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association, we launched a webinar in three languages with other tools to train hotel and lodging staff to recognize and report signs of human trafficking. In addition to hotels, we are currently working with mall security teams and have begun a partnership with the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association, to reach different sectors of the transportation industry.

SB 444/AB 540 proposes a simple and cost-effective way to reach commercial drivers so they can be alert to the indicators of human trafficking in order to report and prevent it. According to the latest published DOT data, there are over two hundred thousand valid CDL holders in Wisconsin.¹ Imagine the power of that number when, over time, as proposed in this bill, every new licensee receives instruction in the recognition and prevention of human trafficking.

In fact, we really don't have to imagine, because this concept has already been demonstrated to be effective by Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT)², a national group that has trained hundreds of thousands within the trucking industry nationwide to recognize and report human trafficking. They have shared success story after success story, centered on the same theme: Someone who was trained about what to look for in the course of their everyday job, made a call because something didn't seem quite right. What has happened within the trucking industry, as a result of TAT's training, is remarkable: Members of the industry have gone from being known as a group targeted by traffickers as a potential customer base, to being a very important source of tips and reports about suspected trafficking to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Truckers' calls to the hotline have identified a total of 525 cases of potential human trafficking, identifying 972 potential victims from these cases, with 315 of those being minors.³

Whether it is while fueling up, stopping at a rest stop, driving through a major transportation hub or on a rural route, CDL holders are in the position to see and report signs of human trafficking. We just need to get the information to them.

DOJ partnered with TAT in 2014 to conduct outreach to the trucking industry in SE Wisconsin. We have another project in the works with them this year related to the busing and trucking industries and state patrol training. We have great confidence that the workforce in these sectors can turn the tables on traffickers. Many traffickers move their victims around and seek to isolate them, counting on the ignorance of the public. They exploit legitimate businesses to promote their criminal activities. They prosper when the public doesn't know the signs of trafficking and when the public believes that victims aren't really victims. We can change this.

DOJ supports SB 444/AB 540 because it engages members of a sector who have a

¹ Source: In 2016, there were 204,226 valid CDL holders according to Wisconsin DOT Bureau of Drivers Services, Report YRCDLDAT accessed 02/06/18: <http://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/about-wisdot/newsroom/statistics/factsfig/cdl-stats.pdf>

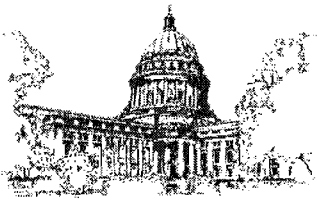
² Truckers Against Trafficking is a 501c3 non-profit whose mission is to educate, equip, empower and mobilize members of the trucking industry to recognize the signs of human trafficking and know how to combat it through the normal course of their jobs. Information about the training and resources available from TAT can be found at: www.TruckersAgainstTrafficking.org

³ Data provided by Truckers Against Trafficking and the National Human Trafficking Resource Center

very real chance of seeing indicators of human trafficking and when that happens, we want them to recognize it as such and report it so that victims can get assistance faster and traffickers can be apprehended more often.

We urge your support of the bill and I thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.

If you have any questions please contact DOJ's Director of Government Affairs, Lane Ruhland at ruhland@doj.stat.wi.us or (608) 640-7203.



STATE SENATOR **LaTonya Johnson**

WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

6TH DISTRICT

**Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
Testimony on 2017 Senate Bill 444/Assembly Bill 540
February 6, 2018**

Chairwoman Darling and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify on 2017 Senate Bill 444/Assembly Bill 540 today.

Wisconsin has earned an unfortunate and appalling distinction as a national human trafficking hub. We are a state where pimps and traffickers come and steal our children off of our streets, forcing them into sexual slavery in circuits like Chicago, Las Vegas, and other parts of the country.

Given that truck drivers are literally where the rubber meets the road where human trafficking occurs along our highways, they can and do play a critical role in identifying and preventing traffickers who create victims through the exploitation of our transportation system.

Truck stops and rest areas are two of the most common places where human trafficking can occur. According to the I-94 Human Trafficking Awareness Project, Interstate 94 is a known circuit by traffickers to transport victims from Chicago to Milwaukee, Madison, Eau Claire, Minneapolis, and the North Dakota oil fields. As a result, truck stops, rest stops, restaurants, gas stations, and hotels along the highway have become common places that victims frequent. Research indicates that education is the number one way to stop trafficking.

As of 2016, Wisconsin has 309,687 licensed commercial drivers. This a vast network of eyes and ears within the interstate trade industry that can support law enforcement in the investigation, arrest, and prosecution of traffickers.

Recognizing the importance that truck drivers can play in identifying and preventing human trafficking, Rep. Kleefisch and I have drafted this legislation which will establish industry-specific materials on the recognition and prevention of human trafficking for use in the instruction in driver education courses that provide instruction in the operation of commercial motor vehicles. This training will affect new drivers only.

Under this legislation, the Wisconsin Department of Justice, in consultation with the Wisconsin Technical College System Board and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, shall identify and establish industry-specific materials for use in the instruction in the recognition and prevention of human trafficking by June 30, 2019.

We drafted this legislation in consultation with the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association and Truckers Against Trafficking, a nationwide organization that educates and mobilizes members of the trucking and travel plaza industry to combat domestic sex trafficking. They have developed an industry training program used by commercial motor vehicle instructors across the nation that can be viewed on their website, which our offices have emailed to committee members.

Thus far, this legislation has earned the support of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, City of Milwaukee, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, Schneider National Inc., Truckers Against Trafficking, United Migrant Opportunity Services Inc., Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association, and Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to testify today and for your consideration of this bipartisan, common-sense legislation. I would also like to thank Rep. Kleefisch for his work on this bill as the lead Assembly author.