

# AMANDA STUCK

State Representative ♦ 57<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Committee members for hearing this bill today.

As you can probably tell from the list of co-sponsors, its companion bill, SB 308's history in the Senate, and the organizations registered in support, this is a good, bi-partisan bill which will help to tackle the issue of human trafficking in our state. I would also like to thank Rep. Kleefisch for working on this bill with me and Lt. Jeff Miller of the Appleton Police Department who is here today and who brought this bill idea to me.

I'll be brief, this is a simple bill which increases the penalty of repeat patronization of a prostitute to a felony. Human trafficking and prostitution is a huge issue across the state, and we as Legislators need to continue to take actions to help tackle and to raise awareness about this problem. In recent years, we have recognized that women engaged in prostitution are often not there by choice, they are the victims who have been coerced through drugs and violence into selling themselves for the benefit of others. This bill helps to tackle one key issue in this problem, demand. Without a demand for prostitution, it simply would not be as large of a problem as it is. Often times those who visit prostitutes aren't there for their first time, they are repeat offenders, so as a state we can and we should crack down on those fueling this disgusting industry in our state. This bill helps to increase penalties on those fueling this industry while not impacting the victims of these crimes.

Lt. Miller is here and others from the Fox Valley who can tell more about the real-world impact of this legislation and this issue, and I thank him for coming to me with this idea and for being here today. Lastly, I would just add that this bill passed out of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety on a unanimous 5-0 vote last week, and that Attorney General Brad Shimmel publicly supports this bill.

Thank you again for your time and I'd be happy to answer any questions.



**DAN FEYEN**

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To: The Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety  
From: Sen. Dan Feyen  
Re: Assembly Bill 400

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing today.

The intention of this legislation is to combat the epidemic of human trafficking across the state. We are bringing forward this bill to crack down on the repeat patronization of a prostitute and help limit a major factor in the spread of this problem: demand.

This bill was requested by law enforcement officials in the Fox Cities and has the support of the Department of Justice, along with a number of other groups.

If this bill were to become law, the third solicitation offense would be raised from a misdemeanor to a felony: three strikes and you're out.

Human trafficking is a serious issue across Wisconsin. Recently in Green Bay thirty five men were taken into custody over the course of a 4-day operation, between Monday, July 17, and Thursday, July 20. Alarmingly, Wisconsin ranks 3rd in the nation in the number of young people rescued from human trafficking by the FBI. Milwaukee tied with Detroit for the second-highest number of children recovered, according to the FBI. Our state has become a hub for human trafficking and that is simply unacceptable.

Communities across the state have taken it upon themselves to help address the epidemic, by creating initiatives such as Outagamie County's Human Sex Trafficking Steering Committee. Statewide, Attorney General Schimel has created the Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force to take on the issue. One of the issues that task forces have uncovered is that the same people are arrested for solicitation in the community repeatedly. If we take steps to increase the penalties for solicitation, we believe we can help to reduce the number of women and children being trafficked and forced into prostitution in this state by decreasing demand.

Thank you for your time today. I welcome any questions you may have.

Good Morning,

My name is Jay Reinke and I am the Co-Chair of the Policy and Legislative Committee of the Human Trafficking Task Force of Greater Milwaukee. I am here today to speak in favor of AB400.

Our mission at the Task Force is to eliminate Human Trafficking. Some may think that is a lofty mission, yet we feel we must reach for an end goal of no one being subjected to a life of prostitution. And although it goes against my moral code to talk about Human Trafficking as a business, I know we have to look at it that way, because the pimps and traffickers look at it as a business. And the business rule of supply and demand is important if we want to eliminate Human Trafficking. AB400 is a bill that addresses the demand side of the business of Human Trafficking.

Presently, the brunt of the punishment of the crime of prostitution falls on the prostitute, whether they have been trafficked, or not. The burden on the purchaser has not been as painful. We, at the Human Trafficking Task Force of Greater Milwaukee, are in favor of this legislation because it does focus on the "Johns" and "Janes," and adds what we consider to be a much needed harsher penalty to habitual users of prostitutes.

We, at the Task Force, want the renters of our daughters and sons to know that their actions have consequences. The stronger the consequences, the more of a deterrent it will be to the offender. We would certainly support dropping the number of arrests to two if the authors of the legislation were so inclined to do so, and we do give our support to this bill as it stands. We hear from "survivors" and "thrivers" that the "Johns" do not always get arrested, or can be let go with a warning, so it may take a while for an individual to get to their third arrest. Sometimes attending a "John" school can get an individual's arrest removed from their record. Our hope is that "Johns" will be held accountable from their first interaction with law enforcement so that the third time is not really their sixth or

seventh. We know that more education for law enforcement may be needed for that to happen, and offer our support in any way we can to make that happen.

The Human Trafficking Task Force of Greater Milwaukee is dedicated to helping the victims of Human Trafficking and making sure that those who chose to abuse the women, and men, in our community are punished. AB400 strengthens the tools that law enforcement and our courts have in deterring men and women from renting our daughters and sons, and that is why we support AB400.

Thank You.

**Testimony of State Senator Lena C. Taylor**  
**Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety**  
**Assembly Bill 400**  
**September 7, 2017**

Chairman Spiros, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony on Assembly Bill 400, relating to patronizing a prostitute and providing a criminal penalty.

Prostitution has found a hold in areas throughout Wisconsin. A recent bust in Oshkosh resulted in the arrest of 13 'johns' ranging from 22 to 73 years old from cities across the state, including Appleton, Fond du Lac, Hilbert, Manitowoc, Neenah, Tomahawk, Viroqua, Watertown and Wautoma. A Madison spa was recently been revealed to be operating as a front for a prostitution ring, and Madison police detective Roger Baker has since stated that the problem of prostitution is "...pervasive, and it seems to be organized and happening all over the city."

My own district's reputation has especially suffered, with high-profile criminal convictions and sizeable law enforcement actions specifically surrounding prostitution. Interstate 41, between Milwaukee and Green Bay, is considered one of the most active prostitution corridors in the state. Recently, a man, woman and 15-year-old girl were arrested for prostitution in Oshkosh after making the trip there from Milwaukee. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel has published multiple articles surrounding prostitution in the area, with stories of pimps holding up traffic on Greenfield Avenue so cars could be approached more easily and pastors being propositioned twice on their way to church.

While there is no one silver-bullet solution, there are a number of policy options that we can use to reduce and eradicate prostitution. Attorney General Brad Schimel has stated that the driver of prostitution in Wisconsin is demand. In 2013, the Wisconsin Department of Justice reported that nearly every county was affected by prostitution. While Milwaukee gets the media attention, this is a statewide issue – it is not exclusively rural or urban.

This bill, with its penalty enhancer for repeat offenders, addresses demand and give prosecutors the tools they need to protect victims. In addition, it is in line with best practices nationwide. The Center for Problem-Oriented Policing advised that strategies focused exclusively on arresting prostitutes are unlikely to be effective. They mention that the sex trade adjusts constantly and that "pimps" tend to set up in areas where there's high demand and few arrests.

I want to thank Representative Kleefisch for his leadership on this issue and I ask the members of the committee for your support of Assembly Bill 400. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.