



# JANEL BRANDTJEN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 22<sup>ND</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Let me begin by saying thank you to Chairman Spiros and the members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety for holding this hearing today on AB 34, regarding the sexual exploitation of children.

The exploitation of children is something that we all can agree is something no civilized society should allow. To rob our children of their childhood innocence for profit or pleasure is certainly something we can work together to stop.

Regrettably Wisconsin has been receiving much attention in the past few years regarding this issue. Even though Milwaukee has been called a "hub" for this horrific activity, human trafficking rings have been exposed all across the state.

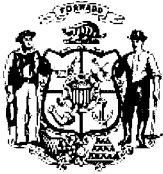
This bill would simply add a surcharge of \$5000 for those seeking to patronize a prostitute, pandering, or operating a place of prostitution. Half of the money would be used for treatment and services for sex-trafficking victims and the other half for criminal investigative operations and law enforcement relating to Internet crimes against children. Both of these programs have served Wisconsin well and will benefit greatly from the additional funding.

The bill has a wide range of support including the City of Milwaukee, law enforcement and the United Migrant Opportunity Service (UMOS).

Thank you again for the opportunity to address this issue,

State Representative Janel Brandtjen

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janel Brandtjen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and end.



# ANDRÉ JACQUE

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*Testimony in Support of AB 34 before the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety  
State Senator André Jacque*

Chairman Spiros and Members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of Assembly Bill 34, legislation Rep. Brandtjen and I have re-introduced with Sen. Taylor and Rep. Crowley and a broad bi-partisan coalition of legislators to attack the growing scourge of human trafficking in Wisconsin. AB 34 is modeled after current law in the states of Florida and Washington, and as in those states imposes a mandatory \$5,000 surcharge on individuals convicted of patronizing/soliciting prostitutes or keeping a place of prostitution. This change has been suggested by investigators, prosecutors and victims' support and advocacy groups as a means to address present penalties for soliciting prostitution which provide an insufficient deterrent, citing a high incidence of repeat solicitation offenses by many individuals with enough disposable income to quietly pay existing fines.

The federal government acknowledges the link between prostitution and trafficking in women and children as a form of modern day slavery. Unfortunately, Milwaukee has become known as the sex trafficking capital of the Midwest and the problem has been rapidly spreading across Wisconsin, particularly to the Fox Valley and the Green Bay area.

As in Florida and Washington (which have been recognized by the Polaris Project for utilizing best practices in the fight against human trafficking), this legislation would similarly create in Wisconsin an additional \$5,000 surcharge for violations of patronizing prostitutes, soliciting prostitutes, pandering, and keeping a place of prostitution, and equally split the proceeds of the surcharge to increase the appropriations for Internet Crimes Against Children task forces and services for Sex Trafficking Victims (Wis. Stats. 20.437 (1) (e)). Demand for prostitution drives human trafficking and a wide variety of societal costs, and increasing the civil penalty will significantly enhance deterrence while funding much-needed victim services and enforcement efforts. It is critical for initiatives like safe harbor legislation that we build capacity to assist victims in breaking free by increasing funding for victim services.

This legislation enjoyed strong bi-partisan support last session, passing out of this committee by a unanimous 11-0 vote and the Senate Judiciary & Public Safety Committee on a 4-1 vote, but did not come to the floor for a vote, dying in the Joint Finance Committee where it would have needed an affirmative vote because of the revenue it would generate for the state. I am very pleased that the Senate co-chair and vice chair of the Joint Finance Committee are co-sponsors of this legislation this session and that we can avoid last session's fate. AB 34 is formally supported by the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association, Badger Sheriffs, Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association, sex trafficking victim advocacy organizations like Eye Heart World, UMOS, and the City of Milwaukee.

Thank you again for your consideration of Assembly Bill 34.