



STATE SENATOR LaTonya Johnson

WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

6TH DISTRICT

Good morning Chairman Wanggaard and members of the committee. Thank you for holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 960 (SB 960)--which would have Wisconsin join states like Ohio and Tennessee by adding human trafficking awareness education as a required subject in our state's cosmetology and barbering curriculum.

The beauty and cosmetology industry provides essential services that enhance well-being and self-confidence. However, this focus on appearance makes it a breeding ground for human trafficking, both exploitation of vulnerable individuals and a means for traffickers to groom and control victims. Sex traffickers exploit the industry by utilizing salons for victim "makeovers," while labor traffickers force victims to work under exploitative conditions.

SB 960 tackles this issue head-on by emphasizing education and awareness, and helping to ensure that those professionals most likely to encounter human trafficking in the workplace are able to identify it. Understanding the dynamics of human trafficking, identifying red flags, and knowing how to report suspicions are vital for empowering these professionals to become frontline heroes in the fight against trafficking.

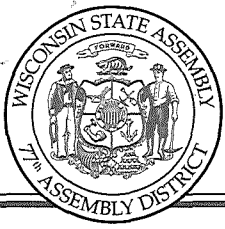
This bill also builds on the success of 2019 Act 27, a bipartisan bill that I co-authored with Rep. Joel Kleefisch, which added human trafficking awareness training to our state's commercial driver's license (CDL) programs. That curriculum was developed in a collaboration between DOJ, DOT, and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS); and we envision a similar process for SB 960 between DOJ, WTCS, and the Cosmetology and Barbering Examining Board.

We talk a lot about "if you see something, say something," but with human trafficking, the problem is often that you don't see it at all. If you don't know what to look for, victims of exploitation can easily pass unnoticed. Trained professionals will be better equipped to identify and report potential trafficking situations, giving vulnerable individuals a lifeline and increasing chances of intervention.

The bill will also empower professionals themselves to recognize and respond to their own potential exploitation, ensuring their safety and well-being. By prioritizing training and awareness, SB 960 will put traffickers on notice that the beauty industry is not a safe place for them to operate.

Human trafficking is a heinous crime that steals lives and destroys futures. SB 960 offers a valuable opportunity to combat it from within the beauty industry. By equipping professionals with knowledge and tools, we can create a network of awareness that empowers intervention and prevents exploitation.

Once again, thank you to committee members for your consideration of this important piece of legislation, and thank you to my co-authors--Rep. Stubbs and Rep. Goeben for their work on this bipartisan bill.



February 21, 2024

Senate Bill 960—Relating to: instruction on human trafficking in licensed schools of barbering, schools of cosmetology, and specialty schools.

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

Good morning Chairman Senator Van Wanggaard, Vice Chairman Senator Andre Jacque, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 960—Relating to: instruction on human trafficking in licensed schools of barbering, schools of cosmetology, and specialty schools. I would also like to thank Representative Joy Goeben and Senator LaTonya Johnson for their collaboration with me on this bipartisan bill created for recommendation by the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking.

Today, I would like to express my strong support for SB 960 because of the opportunity it presents to combat human trafficking in our state's beauty and personal care businesses. Those who work in service industries related to beauty and personal grooming are more likely than average members of the public to encounter both perpetrators and survivors of human trafficking. Sex traffickers may bring trafficked persons to hair stylists, hair removal salons, or nail salons for services in order to make them more attractive to sex buyers. Conversely, labor traffickers may force victims to work in the hair, nail, or spa industries under conditions of coercion or indentured servitude.

Under current law, there are no requirements for employees of these industries, such as hairstylists, nail technicians, and estheticians, to undergo any sort of training pertaining to human trafficking, despite the large amount of contact they are likely to have with this issue. Education and awareness are crucial components for the abolition of human trafficking, especially in spaces where exploitation is more likely to take place. We must do better in equipping our industry professionals to identify and report instances of trafficking.

Under Senate Bill 960, the Department of Justice will work in collaboration with the Wisconsin Technical College District Board, the Department of Safety and Professional Service, and the Cosmetology Examining Board to identify and establish industry specific training materials on the recognition and reporting of human trafficking. Under the bill, DSPS and the Cosmetology Examining Board must also require that schools of barbering, schools of cosmetology, and specialty schools provide instruction on the dynamics of exploitation.

On the Assembly side, the version of this bill that passed the floor has been amended to remove DSPS as a party responsible for creating instructional materials. The amendment also clarifies that schools of barbering shall provide instruction on the dynamics of exploitation. This amendment was developed to satisfy stakeholder concerns with the bill, and I hope you will consider this amendment on the Senate side.



WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Shelia Stubbs

77TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Thank you for the opportunity today to speak more about my support for SB 960 and the need for comprehensive human trafficking education for beauty and personal care industry professionals. By raising awareness and empowering bystanders to intervene in trafficking situations, we will take the first necessary steps toward a trafficking-free Wisconsin. I am happy to answer any questions.

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WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

TO: Senator Van Wanggaard, Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

FROM: David Earleywine, Associate Director

DATE: February 21, 2024

RE: Support for SB 940, SB 942, SB 945, SB 946, SB 949, SB 954, SB 960, SB 961,
Human Trafficking

On behalf of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of the bishops of Wisconsin, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the following bills being heard in this committee today:

SB 940, Mandatory Training Regarding Human Trafficking
SB 942, Human Trafficking of Adults at Risk for the Purpose of Commercial Sex Acts
SB 945, Sex Offender Registration for Certain Crimes
SB 946, Testimony of a Child in a Criminal Proceeding for a Human Trafficking Crime
SB 949, Courtroom Supports and Sealing Identity of Child Victims and Witnesses
SB 954, Creation of a Human Trafficking Council
SB 960, Instruction on Human Trafficking in Certain Specialty Schools (Barbering)
SB 961, Human Trafficking Victim Services Grant Program

Human trafficking constitutes one of the gravest offenses against basic human rights and dignity. It preys upon the most vulnerable men, women, and children, who are frequently coerced into performing the most degrading forms of human labor. It denies everything that a civilized society stands for and that Catholic social teaching espouses: the protection of human dignity and human rights; the preferential option for the poor; the call to family and community; the rights of workers; and solidarity.

As of 2022, it is estimated that over 27 million people are victims of human trafficking.¹ This can take the form of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, coerced and forced labor, child soldiers, and more. That number includes more than 3.3 million children. In Wisconsin specifically, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reports nearly 800 cases involving over 1,600 victims with the vast majority suffering from sex trafficking.²

¹ International Labour Organization, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, (September 2022)
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_854733.pdf

² Spectrum News 1, *How big of a problem is sex trafficking in Wisconsin?* (April 24, 2023)
<https://spectrumnews1.com/wi/milwaukee/news/2023/04/19/part-1--how-big-of-a-problem-is-sex-trafficking-in-wisconsin->

The Catholic Church, along with other religious and secular institutions, is involved in combating human trafficking both nationally and internationally. In the U.S., the Catholic Coalition Against Human Trafficking, which consists of about twenty Catholic organizations, was one of the groups that helped draft the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and its subsequent reauthorizations.³ Catholic women religious have been at the forefront of anti-trafficking work.⁴ They and countless other lay Catholics reach out directly to persons who are being trafficked to help with housing, transportation, childcare, employment, etc. In Milwaukee, the newly established St. Bakhita House, in partnership with Franciscan Peacemakers Clare Community, provides supportive community housing for women who are seeking to escape sex trafficking. Across Wisconsin, among people of every faith, awareness is growing that sex trafficking is destroying lives and wreaking havoc on families and communities.

The WCC, therefore, applauds those involved with the bipartisan task force for bringing forward these bills. These bills strive to give victims of human trafficking some hope that they will be delivered from their bondage and help prevent others from being ensnared in this violent and degrading world. We strongly urge the Legislature to pass these bills.

³ The Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAH), <https://www.usccb.org/offices/anti-trafficking-program/coalition-catholic-organizations-against-human-trafficking>

⁴ U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking, <https://sistersagainstrafficking.org>



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

Testimony for the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

Senate Bill 960

Relating to instruction on human trafficking in licensed schools of barbering, schools of cosmetology, and specialty schools

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

As Chair of the Speaker's Task Force on Human Trafficking, I would like to share a few thoughts on this bill. This bill is a product of the hearings held during the past four months where our Human Trafficking Task Force attempted to better understand how trafficking is affecting our society, especially young people. We learned from agency representatives, DOJ, County DA offices, multiple speakers from local law enforcement, and not-for-profit victim support organizations what a challenge it is to turn the tide of human trafficking in Wisconsin.

This exercise gave us a clear pathway to several bills we could introduce that would have an effective influence and help reduce the level of sex and child sex trafficking in Wisconsin. This is one of those bills and the Task Force recommends it for passage.

Individuals employed in service industries, including hair and nail salons, have a higher likelihood than the general public of encountering both perpetrators and survivors of human trafficking. Sex traffickers may bring their victims to establishments like hair salons, hair removal salons, or nail salons to enhance their appeal to potential buyers. Victims of labor trafficking may be compelled to work in hair, nail, or spa businesses under coercive conditions or indentured servitude.

In the effort to address human trafficking within service industries, SB 960 mandates collaboration between the Department of Justice, the Technical College System Board, the Department of Safety and Professional Services, and the Cosmetology Examining Board. The goal is to create instructional materials that will assist students in recognizing and reporting instances of human trafficking. Furthermore, schools specializing in barbering, cosmetology, and other beauty service sectors will be obligated to include education on the dynamics of human trafficking and exploitation as part of their curriculum.

In the fight against human trafficking, particularly in environments where exploitation is prevalent, education and awareness play pivotal roles. This bill emphasizes the importance of educating beauty service professionals on identifying and preventing human trafficking. By enhancing the knowledge of these professionals, AB 981 boosts their capacity to intervene in trafficking situations and empowers victims to advocate for themselves.

I want to thank Rep. Stubbs, Rep. Goeben, and Senator Johnson for introducing this bill and testifying on its behalf.

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