

Offered by Councilors Frank Baker and Ayanna Pressley JACKSON, LINEHAN, FLAHERTY
CIOMMO, CAMPBELL, EDDAIBI-GEORGE, LAMATTINA, MCCARTHY,
O'MALLEY, ZAKIM AND WU



CITY OF BOSTON

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF H. 4623 AN ACT TO REDUCE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- WHEREAS,** On March 14, 2016, Representative Michael S. Day of Stoneham filed H. 4623, An Act to Reduce Sexual Exploitation of Victims of Human Trafficking; and
- WHEREAS,** H.4623 is supported by a bipartisan group of over 30 legislators and advocates, including Casa Myrna and the EVA Center; and
- WHEREAS,** If enacted, this legislation will update existing Massachusetts' Human Trafficking laws by bringing Massachusetts in line with 29 other states and allowing survivors to petition courts to vacate certain criminal convictions related to the period when they were victimized by human traffickers; and
- WHEREAS,** The procedure for vacating convictions for prostitution-related crimes such as solicitation, sex for a fee, common night-walking and resorting to a tavern/restaurant for immoral purposes, is currently very difficult and time consuming; and
- WHEREAS,** Criminal convictions create major obstacles for individuals seeking housing, employment, or other quality of life matters; and victims of the Commercial Sex Trade often suffer from additional physical, mental, social, emotional, and violent trauma that require both short and long term care; and
- WHEREAS,** According to the Federal Bureau of Investigations, human sex trafficking is the most common form of modern-day slavery; and estimates place the number of domestic and international victims in the millions, mostly females and children enslaved in the commercial sex industry for little or no money, and victims often lack the appropriate support services to advocate on their own behalf and escape exploitation; and
- WHEREAS,** According to the United States Department of Justice, children are being recruited and coerced into the world of prostitution in our cities, including Boston.
- WHEREAS,** According to the Juvenile Justice Exchange, "pimps" use a variety of coercion techniques to lure youth into prostitution with promises of food, shelter, money, love, etc. and once control has been gained they often use acts of violence, illegal drugs, intimidation, and/or psychological manipulation to trap these children into a life of prostitution; and
- WHEREAS,** Victims are taught to lie about their age and are trained not to trust law enforcement and to lie to protect their "pimps" and as a result, are often not recognized as victims, and may be arrested and jailed; and

WHEREAS, Victims of human trafficking have been disconnected from family and community, are totally physically and psychologically dependent on their abusers, and thus face many dangers and are often in need of specialized services, not widely available, to treat physical illness, drug addiction, physical and sexual trauma; and

WHEREAS, The City of Boston has a population of individuals who are currently victimized by the Commercial Sex Trade for the sole benefit of the predators victimizing them; last year alone 62 human trafficking cases were reported in Massachusetts and many more go unreported; and

WHEREAS, This legislation will help survivors of human trafficking obtain justice and move forward with their lives. **THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, That the the Boston City Council, in meeting assembled, hereby formally endorses House Docket 4623 and urges the State Legislature to pass this legislation as expeditiously as possible; and that this Resolution be duly signed by the President of the City Council and attested to and a copy thereof transmitted by the Clerk of the City of Boston.

In City Council April 6, 2016. Adopted.

Attest:


Maureen Feeney
City Clerk