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To: The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety  
From: Sen. Dan Feyen  
Re: Senate Bill 308

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. Just last month 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.



# JOEL KLEEFISCH

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 38<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## **Testimony on the Preventing Human Trafficking bill, Senate Bill 308**

*Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety*

Thank you Chairman Wanggaard and members of the Committee for holding a hearing today on the 'Human Trafficking Prevention Bill,' Senate Bill 308, an important bill that will crack down on the demand for human trafficking in our state.

This legislation increases the penalty for repeat solicitation, in order to help reduce the number of women and children being trafficked and forced into prostitution in this state by decreasing demand. With this bill, the third offense would be raised to a felony: three strikes and you're out. This is important, as the Attorney General's statewide Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force has found that the same people are arrested for solicitation over and over again.

The horrific human trafficking issue has become an epidemic in our state and is much bigger than many people realize. Young girls are being human trafficked in every county in our state. The issue is even affecting young boys as well. Milwaukee, alarmingly, is one of the biggest human trafficking hubs in the country, with victims being trafficked from Milwaukee to other parts of the state and country. We need to do whatever we can to keep these young girls, especially, safe and out of harm's way.

This bill was requested by law enforcement officials in the Fox Cities and has the support of the Department of Justice.

**Testimony of State Senator Lena C. Taylor**  
**Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety**  
**Senate Bill 308**  
**August 23, 2017**

Chairman Wanggaard, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony on Senate Bill 308, 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 Senator Wanggaard for his leadership on this issue and I ask the members of the committee for your support of SB 380. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.