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*Testimony in Support of SB 46 before the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety  
State Senator André Jacque*

Chairman Wanggaard and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of Senate Bill 46, 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. SB 46 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 the Assembly committee by a unanimous 11-0 vote and the this 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. SB 46 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 Senate Bill 46.



# JANEL BRANDTJEN

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

Let me begin by saying thank you to Chairman Wanggaard and the members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety for holding this hearing today on SB 46 regarding sexual slavery through coercion and intimidation and the sexual exploitation of children.

The human trafficking and sex slavery industry in the United States is a growing concern for all of us. The use of drugs, violence and fear to trap the most vulnerable women (and men) into these horrible situations is becoming more common and more profitable. Recently there have been several news stories of Asian women being brought to this country under false promises and are then led into a life of prostitution. Young people are terrorized with threats of retaliation on their families, and young children are lead into slavery without their families having any idea what has happened. The exploitation of children is something we all can agree 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.

SB 46 would simply add a surcharge of \$5,000 for those seeking to patronize a prostitute, pandering, or operating a place of prostitution. Half of the money collected 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janel Brandtjen".

State Representative Janel Brandtjen

March 19, 2019

  
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Morgan L. Meador M.Ed.

RE: Senate Bill 46: Prostitution crime surcharge and making an appropriation.

To Sir/Madam Chair; members of the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee

I am a mother of four, a community-oriented educator and licensed consultant, as well as a doctoral candidate with Concordia University. Since 2016, I've been a Shared Hope International Ambassador in the field of anti-trafficking. I'm also a Polaris Project member. In 2015, I began my public advocacy for survivors of human trafficking because, as a survivor of twenty years of human trafficking (ages 3-23), I had finally healed enough, successfully raised my children, and gained enough confidence through my life and education, to believe I would be taken seriously. At least, that's my hope and the reason I'm here today.

I have long been an advocate of merciful sentencing and policies for prison reform. However, in view of the insidious nature of the crime of prostitution, especially when a minor is trapped in such a life and is solicited, I believe this bill, if passed, can serve as a potent statement of intent to Wisconsin residents and visitors. It is because of my history as a formerly trafficked person that I believe this bill has merit.

Why I am in favor of this bill:

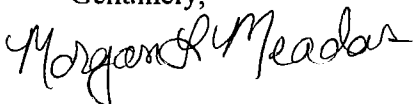
- This is a bill of direct action, where the cause and effect are shown to be related. The monies collected are earmarked for programs that benefit victims and the law enforcement programs that can make safe escape more likely.
- The *demand side* of the equation of human trafficking is being put on notice. Research indicates that approximately 30% of the population will respond to fines or the prospect prison time.
- Providing a message that the human rights of victims are being addressed. With the funds from the surcharge being split between law enforcement programs and victim's recovery and restoration programs, the message is that victims, and their right to become thriving survivors, is set in motion.

Challenges yet to address:

- 70% of solicitation transactions have no interest or respect for the moral and legal prohibitions against human trafficking. Redemptive processes need to be combined with discipline (i.e. Latin, *dicipulus*: student; to learn).
- Fines and imprisonment do not develop moral reasoning. Opportunities to change perceptions do.
- Moral development depends on brain development; it's a result of learning in collaborative environments, with experiences across the life span ---focus on *learning* rather than training alone.

Leadership and education are matters of action. Adults have two choices in life, choices our children and youth, and the vulnerable and wounded among us, require our help to protect: We can do what affirms the life and right of individuals to choose a livelihood that is without harm. Any adult choosing to harm is lacking in self-discipline and we have to ask why.

Genuinely,



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