



To: Members of the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economy and Small Business Development
Rep. Gundrum, Chairman

From: Kathi Kilgore, WHLA Contract Lobbyist

Date: January 24, 2024

Re: Assembly Bill 980 Relating to: displaying a human trafficking resource center hotline poster

On behalf of approximately 600 members of the Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association, including hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfasts, and all of the businesses that support our industry, we thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Assembly Bill 980, which would require hotels to post poster designed by the Wisconsin Department of Justice to help combat human trafficking.

Wisconsin's lodging industry has been proactively working to fight human trafficking for years, and we have invested quite an amount of time and resources into the effort. Through the American Hotel & Lodging Association Foundation's No Room for Trafficking initiative, we support the free distribution of industry-standard courses effectively designed to help eradicate human trafficking from the lodging industry. The first course, "Your Role in Preventing Human Trafficking: Recognize the Signs," is available in 17 different languages and can be delivered online or in person. The second, "Recognize and Respond: Addressing Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Industry," builds on the foundation of the first course and provides increased guidance on responding to potential trafficking situations. This program has a 60-minute module for associates and an 80-minute module for managers. It is delivered online and is available in Spanish, English, Chinese, Arabic, and French.

Additionally, all major brands (i.e., Marriott, Hilton, Wyndham) and the flags they represent (i.e., Fairfield Inn & Suites, DoubleTree, Super 8) have mandated human trafficking training for all of their properties throughout the United States. In Wisconsin, that means we have about 700 lodging properties with employees who have already been trained in Human Trafficking awareness and response.

While we share the goals of the bill's authors, we have some suggested changes to the legislation for you to consider:

- Hotels are not the only lodging options for human traffickers. However, this bill does not place a requirement on the others: motels, bed and breakfasts, tourist rooming houses, short-term rentals (i.e., Airbnb), and campgrounds. We would support a law that applies to all lodging establishments, regardless of the type of lodging they provide.
- As written, lodging operators must use the poster design provided by the Department of Justice. The current poster design is attached to this testimony. We encourage you to consider taking a page from some of the other required signage on our properties, for example, the pool code, which mandates what information must be provided, the minimum size of text, etc. This would allow operators to design a poster that is the best fit for their individual businesses.

We apologize that we are unable to be at the hearing for this important bill as we have a conflicting event occurring in Neenah. Please know that we would love the opportunity to work with you on finding the best and most effective solutions for combating Human Trafficking in Wisconsin.

STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Help Stop the buying and selling of women, men, and children for sex or labor.

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"Info" to BeFree
[233733]



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