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January 27, 2016

Regarding Bills AB 737 and AB 745

Dear Esteemed Members of the Committee on Children and Families:

The Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin has prioritized public policies that diminish

human trafficking and that help the victims of trafficking. The scandal of enslaving children in

our state is real. Thank you for your dedicated work in developing just policies to diminish the

problem and to help victims.

Today, we ask that you to please support **AB 737** as one of the many ways we need to address the problem of sex trafficking. We are not direct service providers. However, everything we have heard in our dialogue individually and at meetings with direct service providers indicates that there is a legal gulf between law enforcement and non-caregivers who are abusive to children, and AB 737 would shrink that gap. It is important to include child sex trafficking in the definition of child abuse and to mandate investigations of child abuse when police suspect the abusers are non-caregivers, and then to direct those children to receive services. AB 737 includes these components. Getting at the non-caregivers will increase our state's ability to find traffickers and to help their victims as well as victims of other types of abuse.

We also ask that you support **AB 745,** requiring agency-placed children to report missing children to law enforcement within eight hours and to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children within 24 hours. This is another very good bill that would diminish trafficking and other forms of abuse.

We need a way to mainstream investigations of traffickers and to get services to our youth. We

can do better for God’s children in Wisconsin.

Thank you and blessings upon you and your work.

Sincerely,



Rev. Cindy Crane

Director

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*LOPPW is a ministry of the ELCA*