



MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF:
New York A-6823

DATE: May 10, 2017

Subject: This legislation aligns NY state law with the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act that allows minors to be considered victims of sex trafficking without the burden to demonstrate that coercion has been used against them. This bill also protects trafficking victims less than 19 years old induced to exploit others.

HEAL Trafficking, Inc. (HEAL) supports A-6823. HEAL is a national interdisciplinary network of over 1000 professionals working at the forefront of the public health response to trafficking in the United States. Victims endure a range of abuses that cause a number of physical and psychological problems, including injuries from violence; sexual assault; various infections; gynecologic problems such as unintended pregnancies and abortions, and a range of untreated chronic conditions. Psychological problems include anxiety, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, trauma-bonding, drug/alcohol addictions, and suicide.

Human trafficking devastates the lives of individuals and destroys families and communities. Children are major targets of human traffickers because they are easier to exploit and the demand is high. "In the US, at least 100,000 American children are victimized in child sex slavery and trafficking, prostitution, commercial sexual exploitation, and rape¹". The trauma children sustain as a result of sex trafficking and their fear of retaliation by their exploiters often prevents child victims from being credible, willing witnesses. A-6823 would lift the burden from sex trafficked children and prevent retraumatization of painful and humiliating experiences. Currently 47 states do not require that prosecutors prove coercion in sex trafficking cases when the victims are minors².

For these reasons, HEAL Trafficking strongly urges the Governor of New York State to sign this legislation into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hanni Stoklosa".

Hanni Stoklosa, MD, MPH
Executive Director,
HEAL Trafficking, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susie Baldwin".

Susie Baldwin, MD, MPH, FACPM
President of the Board of Directors,
HEAL Trafficking, Inc.

¹ http://sharedhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/SHI_National_Report_on_DMST_2009.pdf

² http://sharedhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Shared-Hope-State-law-survey_FFC-under-HT-Law_as-of-12.4.15.pdf