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Title: Strengthen Laws to Curb Human Trafficking Aimed at People Who Buy Sex
Introduced by: Joseph M. Beals, MD, for the Wayne County Delegation
Original Author: Joseph M. Beals, MD
Referred To: Reaffirmation Calendar
House Action: **REAFFIRMED**

Whereas, there have been at least 11 laws passed in Michigan dealing with human trafficking including Public Act 328 of 2014 which imposes stricter penalties on individuals who engage or offer to engage minors in prostitution or who "recruit, entice, harbor, transport, provide, or obtain by any means a minor for commercial sexual activity, or for forced labor or services," and

Whereas, in spite of these stricter laws, human trafficking continues in Michigan because of lax enforcement of existing laws, the large profit that is obtained from human trafficking, and the failure of society to make people aware of the danger of buying sex, and

Whereas, in September 2021, the state of Texas passed House Bill 1540, which was signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott, to make the buying of sex a felony, subject to jail time and large fines-up to two years in prison and fines up to \$10,000; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS advocate that the Michigan Legislature pass a law similar to the Texas statute which makes the buying of sex a felony punishable by prison time and a large monetary penalty.

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: None

Relevant MSMS Policy:

Resolution 14-20 - Curb Human Trafficking

RESOLVED: That MSMS advocate for the passage of human trafficking legislation which toughens criminal and financial penalties for persons soliciting sexual activity for payment rather than the victims of trafficking.

The Recognition and Protection of Human Trafficking Victims

MSMS supports training medical students, residents, and physicians to understand their role in treating patients who are victims of human trafficking.

Human Trafficking Education and Awareness

MSMS encourages the State Board of Education, Michigan secondary schools and colleges, as well as other influential organizations to increase awareness of human trafficking and increase awareness of signs of human trafficking.

Relevant AMA Policy:

Commercial Exploitation and Human Trafficking of Minors H-60.912

Our AMA supports the development of laws and policies that utilize a public health framework to address the commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors by promoting care and services for victims instead of arrest and prosecution.

Physicians Response to Victims of Human Trafficking H-65.966

1. Our AMA encourages its Member Groups and Sections, as well as the Federation of Medicine, to raise awareness about human trafficking and inform physicians about the resources available to aid them in identifying and serving victims of human trafficking.

Physicians should be aware of the definition of human trafficking and of resources available to help them identify and address the needs of victims.

The US Department of State defines human trafficking as an activity in which someone obtains or holds a person in compelled service. The term covers forced labor and forced child labor, sex trafficking, including child sex trafficking, debt bondage, and child soldiers, among other forms of enslavement. Although it's difficult to know just how extensive the problem of human trafficking is, it's estimated that hundreds of thousands of individuals may be trafficked every year worldwide, the majority of whom are women and/or children.

The Polaris Project -

In addition to offering services directly to victims of trafficking through offices in Washington, DC and New Jersey and advocating for state and federal policy, the Polaris Project:

- Operates a 24-hour National Human Trafficking Hotline
- Maintains the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, which provides
 - a. An assessment tool for health care professionals
 - b. Online training in recognizing and responding to human trafficking in a health care context
 - c. Speakers and materials for in-person training
 - d. Links to local resources across the country

The Rescue & Restore Campaign -

The Department of Health and Human Services is designated under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act to assist victims of trafficking. Administered through the Office of Refugee Settlement, the Department's Rescue & Restore campaign provides tools for law enforcement personnel, social service organizations, and health care professionals.

2. Our AMA will help encourage the education of physicians about human trafficking and how to report cases of suspected human trafficking to appropriate authorities to provide a conduit to resources to address the victim's medical, legal and social needs.