



**Kansas Hospital  
ASSOCIATION**

TO: Senate Judiciary

FROM: Tara Mays, Vice President State Legislative Relations

Date: February 2, 2021

RE: SB 56

The Kansas Hospital Association (KHA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments in support of Senate Bill 56 on behalf of our 122 community hospital members.

Kansas hospitals are committed to providing awareness of the resources that are available to victims of human trafficking. As health care providers, we see firsthand some of the impacts of this tragic reality every day. <sup>1</sup>In fact according to the American Public Health Association, estimates show that approximately 80 percent of human trafficking victims are women, and health care providers are often the first professionals to have contact with trafficked women and girls. <sup>2</sup>One study, published by the Health and Human Rights Journal found that close to 50 percent of trafficked individuals saw a health care professional during their exploitation.

For those that work in the hospitals it is important to provide this important resource at the right time and in the correct setting to ensure that we do not further endanger victims of human trafficking. For that reason, we would ask that as the agency establish rules and regulations related to the program, that they provide the flexibility to place signage where it will make the best sense for patients who may be accompanied by their traffickers to a health care facility.

<sup>3</sup>As cited by the Polaris On-Ramps, Intersections, and Exit Routes: A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking, "Survivors in all Polaris focus groups largely supported posting information about National Human Trafficking Hotline numbers in areas where potential victims and at-risk patients could access." The focus group findings highlight the need for health care facilities to post this information in key areas where traffickers aren't likely to be alongside their victims.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We urge you to support SB 56.

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<sup>1</sup> NCSL Human Trafficking and the Health Care System by Lisa Waugh, April 2018. <https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/human-trafficking-and-the-health-care-system.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Health and Human Rights Journal by Schwarz, Unruh, Cronin, Evans-Simpson, Britton and Ramaswamy, June 2016. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5070690/>

<sup>3</sup> Polaris Focus Group; On-Ramps, Intersections, and Exit Routes: A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking, July 2019. <https://polarisproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/A-Roadmap-for-Systems-and-Industries-to-Prevent-and-Disrupt-Human-Trafficking-Social-Media.pdf>