



To: House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

From: Nathan Eberline – Associate Legislative Director & Legal Counsel

Date: March 7, 2013

Re: Senate Bill 61 (Human Trafficking; Juvenile Centers)

The Kansas Association of Counties coordinated its testimony with the Sedgwick County Department of Corrections and its director, Mark Masterson. We mutually applaud the undertaking of SB 61 and the effort to curtail human trafficking. Based on this important policy undertaking, KAC supports the principles behind the bill. Our counties do, however, have a concern about the proposed law.

The current law provides that if a teenage human-trafficking victim runs away from a secure facility, the runaway can end up in a county juvenile-detention facility for up to 180 days. The 180-day period does not include any state-provided treatment or funding from the State to cover the detention stay. It is a substantial expense for counties to support an individual for half a year without funding from the state. When the Kansas Human Trafficking Taskforce addressed this issue, the group discussed a compromise clause to have the State pay for treatment services while in detention. This shared-service approach is a sensible method to control costs, and KAC would like the Legislature to reinsert a funding clause, so counties are not solely bearing the cost of implementing SB 61.

One reason this is this concern is that runaway behavior is typical for victims of human trafficking, and it takes specialized treatment for the victims. So when the courts order extended stays and vital treatment for victims, KAC supports sharing this expense with the State. Again, KAC and the counties back the effort to eliminate the blight of human trafficking, but it is important that we share the effort and cost to accomplish the goal. Thank you for your consideration, and please let us know if we can provide any additional information.