



Catholic Conference of Ohio

Action Alert

Human Trafficking in Ohio

Support SB 235 & HB 493

The Catholic Conference of Ohio supports SB 235 (Fedor, Grendell) & HB 493 (Chandler) that specifically prohibits *human trafficking* within Ohio law. *Human trafficking* is a horrific crime against the basic dignity and rights of the human person. Ohio is one of only seven states without a specific felony offense of *human trafficking*.

Background

Human trafficking is the use of force, fraud, or coercion to compel a person to provide labor, services, or commercial sex against that person's will. It is a form of modern-day slavery, and it affects both foreign nationals and American citizens.

A recent study by the Ohio Attorney General's *Trafficking in Persons Research Commission* estimates that over one thousand children are trafficked in Ohio each year, while several thousand more are considered to be at risk.

Creating a new felony offense of *human trafficking* in Ohio means prosecutors will no longer have to stitch together other crimes, which often carry lighter sentences, in order to stop human traffickers from harming vulnerable people in Ohio.

The Catholic Church will continue to provide pastoral care, education and advocacy regarding human trafficking. We welcome efforts that enhance state, national and international cooperation and enforcement. In the end all of us must work together – church, state and community – to eliminate the root causes and markets that permit traffickers to flourish; to make whole the survivors of the crime, and to ensure that, one day soon, trafficking in human persons vanishes from the face of the earth.

Action Request

The Catholic Conference of Ohio believes that both SB 235 & HB 493, which are identical bills, are needed safeguards in the fight against human trafficking. Please immediately contact your State Senator and Representative and ask his or her support for such legislation.

For contact information of your State Senator and Representative link to: www.legislature.state.oh.us or write to:

Senator _____
Senate Building, Columbus, OH 43215-4276
1-800-282-0253

Representative _____
77 S. High St., Columbus, OH 43215-6111
1-800-282-0253