No Easy Solutions to Ending Human Trafficking in California

The Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (Cast) is proud to champion five cutting-edge proposals that work collectively to prevent human trafficking.

- 20 Years after the passage of the first federal law, The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, to combat human trafficking comprehensively in the US and globally;
- 15 years after the passage of California's first law, AB 22 (Lieber) to combat human trafficking statewide; and
- 10 years after then Mayor Newsom, now Governor Newsom started a human trafficking taskforce in California, and other cities and counties across the state did the same;

California MUST take significant measured steps based on learning over the last 20 years to prevent all forms of human trafficking. Cast asks California to pass a package of legislation and budget provisions that are first steps in addressing the intersectional, complex, and truly thoughtful step-by- step process it will take for California and its community to eradicate this grave human rights abuse in our own backyard. Steps California takes also have a global impact given California's position as the 5th largest economy in the world.

I. **Investing Resources to Prevent Human Trafficking**- Sponsored by Assembly Member Santiago and Senator Stern.

   California must invest an initial $2.5 million in continuing resources for ongoing statewide technical assistance and first responder training for early identification and prevention of human trafficking, not just with a law enforcement focus, but within a human rights and public health framework.

II. **Investing Resources in Research and Evaluation** - Sponsored by Assembly Member Gipson.

   California must make a onetime investment of $6 million to: 1) conduct a comprehensive prevalence study to better understand the nature and extent of human trafficking in our state and 2) evaluate existing services and identify, and encourage the use of "best practices" services programs to support trafficking survivors. Only with this initial understanding can California calculate and plan for

the investment of resources it must make over the long-term to eradicate human trafficking in our state.

III.   Protecting All Child Victims in the Child Welfare System and Ensuring They Are Not Arrested for Crimes Their Traffickers Force Them to Commit –AB 1985 Authored by Assembly Member Rubio.

California must act to ensure our children's protectors in the child welfare system are preventing trafficking, identifying victims as early as possible, and ensuring that child victims are not arrested for crimes they are forced to commit by their exploiters. Legislation must ensure that every child trafficking victim receives specialized supportive services. Although in the last five years California's child welfare system has made great strides in protecting sex trafficked youth, California must act now to ensure that **both sex and labor trafficked youth** receive this same level of support and protection. Only when our child welfare system fully understands the complex and multifaceted faces of this crime will all of California's youth be equally protected and California will have begun the difficult process of preventing this crime from happening to any young person.

IV.   Ending Fraudulent Labor Recruitment to Prevent Human Trafficking and Better Protect All Migrant Workers.

California must act now to increase protection for this vulnerable population. In this climate of fear for immigrants, and our broken federal immigration system, as the state that receives 1 in 5 of the United States temporary workers, California must enact what it started in 2014 with the passage of SB 477 (Steinberg) and fully protect the 150,000 foreign temporary workers that come to California annually. Due to our broken legal immigration system, thousands of legal temporary workers coming to California are vulnerable to human trafficking without stronger regulations of foreign labor recruiters, information for workers, and a right of action against businesses who exploit these vulnerable workers through the foreign recruitment process.

V.   Holding Ourselves Accountable By Adopting Anti-Trafficking Government Procurement Polices To Prevent Human Trafficking in Our Supply Chains.

During the Obama era, there was a major push at the federal level that put strong protections into place to prevent any products tainted by trafficked labor from being purchased through federal procurement processes. Legislation adopting this standard for California Procurement would greatly increase the impact of the federal government efforts as California spends nearly $10 billion in procurement annually. Enacting a procurements policy would have a massive prevention impact both in

terms of specific purchases, but also in terms of applying pressure to companies seeking to maintain their business with the state.

"These proposals combined ensure that California begins to invest in the research and evaluation needed to eliminate human trafficking from our state, ensure the state is investing in early identification, prevention, and coordination of services statewide. It also ensures that child victims of sex and labor trafficking are treated similarly in our child welfare system so that all child victims of this crime receive the support they need and deserve and asks the government to take the necessary steps to hold businesses accountable to prevent trafficking"

- Kay Buck, CAST's CEO.

#####

Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (CAST)

Systemic change is at the core of CAST's mission. Taking a survivor-centered approach to ending modern slavery, CAST has a proven track record of working directly with survivors of human trafficking which builds an important bridge between practice and policy to inform effective policy initiatives. By developing broad-based partnerships, CAST effectively advocates for policies that work to end human trafficking and help survivors rebuild their lives.

Contact:

Stephanie Richard, Cast Senior Policy Advisor,

Stephanie@castla.org; 213-3651906 x 115