

**Resolution No. 216-2019****Council Member:** B. Jones

**An emergency resolution urging the Mayor of the City of Cleveland and the Superintendent of the Cleveland Municipal School District to consider developing and implementing a community-wide educational awareness initiative on human trafficking in order to educate and increase public awareness on this major public health and safety issue.**

**WHEREAS**, human trafficking is a human rights violation, especially in sex trade, slavery and involuntary servitude, defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, or abduction, or fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation; and

**WHEREAS**, globally and in the United States human trafficking, especially sex trafficking, disproportionately affects women and girls; and

**WHEREAS**, human trafficking also affects highly vulnerable populations to human trafficking activities including but not limited to the economically vulnerable, persons with disabilities, and runaway youth, with disproportionate vulnerability for youth who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender; and

**WHEREAS**, victims of human trafficking in the United States have been identified in multiple legal and illicit industries that can often expose them to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that can lead to serious and complex health and psychological consequences; and

**WHEREAS**, worldwide, human trafficking generates approximately \$36 billion each year, where \$1 dollar for every \$4 dollars circulates in the United States, where freedom is an inalienable right; and

**WHEREAS**, commercial sex trafficking includes “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act; children in “the life” are considered victims of severe forms of trafficking, and they are in our schools; and

**WHEREAS**, every year, hundreds of thousands of children, mostly girls in early adolescence, are at risk for human trafficking whereby they are subjected to physical, verbal and sexual abuse, as well as facing social isolation, lack of care, manipulation, and severe health concerns, including HIV, and are subject to severe emotional trauma and must overcome stigmatization and post-traumatic stress, and in some states they may face the threat of a criminal record; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the 2017 Ohio State's Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission report, authorities investigated 202 human trafficking cases in 2017 that amounted to a 50 percent increase over the previous year, and the majority of those cases involved the sex trade; and

**WHEREAS**, according to a study by the University of Toledo Human Trafficking and Social Justice Institute, social media is increasingly being exploited to contact, recruit and sell children for sex; and another study that was requested by the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission revealed how traffickers in human trafficking often target and connect with vulnerable children on the internet and social media; and

**WHEREAS**, it is vitally important to educate parents, professionals and youth, especially in middle school, or teenage daughters who may be unaware about the dangers of online predatory practices used by master manipulators in human trafficking; and

**WHEREAS**, public awareness about human trafficking still needs to reach broader communities and communicate more information to the public about the nuances of this crime, and how the use of the internet and social media are becoming more popular tools that human traffickers use to target their victims; and

**WHEREAS**, there are limited studies in the United States on the profile of traffickers and their unique patterns of perpetration, as well as specific statistics on human trafficking activities and crimes that are taking place in communities across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, community educational prevention programs addressing human trafficking and re-trafficking are needed for those in health care, middle schools and high schools, and other community venues, and the law enforcement community in order to educate the public on this serious social problem to increase public awareness; and

**WHEREAS**, citizens, health and social service providers, school teachers and law enforcement officers need training and tools to identify and attend to victims of human trafficking effectively, and to become more educated and aware on how information and communications technologies are being used for human trafficking; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council encourages the development of educational presentations on human trafficking workshops at neighborhood community centers, Cleveland Public Schools and throughout all five police districts in the city of Cleveland in order to educate citizens, youth, teachers and law enforcement officers about learning how to identify victims of human trafficking, as well as knowing how to monitor internet and social media activity of teenage youth in order to safeguard them from human trafficking predators, as well as becoming aware about the various resources such as local and national human trafficking hotlines and other agencies that provide helpful information on this topic; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council encourages local law enforcement to begin collecting more specific crime data and statistics on human trafficking activities that are taking place within the city of Cleveland to thoroughly identify by category victims and specific human trafficking activities that are taking place in the city of Cleveland; and

**WHEREAS**, this resolution constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health or safety, now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND:**

**Section 1.** That this Council urges the Mayor of the City of Cleveland and the Superintendent of the Cleveland Municipal School District to consider developing and implementing a community-wide educational awareness initiative on human trafficking in order to educate and increase public awareness on this major public health and safety issue.

**Section 2.** That the Council of the City of Cleveland hereby directs the Clerk of Council to transmit copies of this resolution to Mayor Frank Jackson, City of Cleveland and to Eric Gordon, Superintendent of the Cleveland Public School District.

**Section 3.** That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and, provided it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Mayor; otherwise it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

**Adopted March 4, 2019.**

**Effective March 5, 2019.**