

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Human Trafficking Engagement (HTE) Day – Pre-Event Dinner highlights bi-partisan support to fight trafficking

Bi-partisan agreement reached to further human trafficking training for police, prosecutors. Other action plans were also reached to be announced at the Human Trafficking Engagement Event today (www.WashingtonHTE.com).

Olympia, WA January 11, 2010 – Senators Fraser (D) and Delvin (R), Representatives O'Brien (D) and Klippert (R), and Prosecutor Ed Holm (D) of Thurston County were present at a pre-event dinner sponsored by Seattle Against Slavery. Discussion focused on furthering training for prosecutor and in all levels of law enforcement to more effectively fight human trafficking.

Nathan Wilson of Project Meridian Foundation and Linda Smith of Shared Hope International presented staggering findings about the prevalence of domestic minor human trafficking. As a result, legislators agreed to the following action items.

Legislators with law enforcement background agreed to sign a joint letter to police guilds and associations urging them to support enhanced anti-trafficking training and protocol development.

Senator Fraser and Representative O'Brien agreed to request an executive order from the Governor to permit the immediate posting of Trafficking Victim Hotline notices at critical locations. Texas has a similar hotline notice law that has yielded success according to Polaris Project.

Though Senator Kohl-Welles has a bill proposing a similar Trafficking Victim Hotline notice this legislative session, urgency is needed as the 2010 Winter Olympics rapidly approach. Hundreds of victims are expected to be trafficked to work in brothels that will emerge as a result of the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, BC.

All legislators present agreed to develop an Interim Work Plan to pursue more hearings on human trafficking in the following committees: Ways and Means, Public Safety, Judiciary, Commerce & Labor and Economic Development Trade & Innovation.

About Seattle Against Slavery

Seattle Against Slavery (SAS) is a grassroots coalition working to make a slave-free world, one city at a time. Uniting community-based abolition activists, local and national non-government organizations, government agencies, and other coalitions, SAS seeks to raise human trafficking awareness and mobilize the public to better advocate for victims, enhance survivor care, promote legislation to combat human trafficking, and help service providers build capacity. For more information about SAS, visit <http://seattleagainstsavery.org>.

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