

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

Testimony in Support of HB 461

Protect Trafficked Minors Act

May 22, 2018

My name is Jim Tobin. I am an associate director with the Catholic Conference of Ohio. Human trafficking is a horrific crime against the basic dignity and rights of the human person. We urge passage of HB 461.

The Catholic Conference of Ohio believes it is important for Ohio to continue strengthening protections for victims of human trafficking. HB 461 provides yet another series of helpful changes. Such changes will help ensure that minors up to age 18 will have a greater degree of protection under Ohio law.

In a recent address to participants in the 2018 *World Day of Prayer, Reflection and Action Against Human Trafficking*, Pope Francis again denounced trafficking as a crime against humanity. He stated, “It is “a true form of slavery, unfortunately more and more widespread, which concerns every country, even the most developed.” He called for a shared sense of responsibility and firmer political will to gain victory on this front.

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.

Thank you for this opportunity.