

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

Testimony in Support of SB 13

Protect Trafficked Minors Act

March 6, 2019

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 SB 13.

The Catholic Conference of Ohio believes it is important for Ohio to continue strengthening protections for victims of human trafficking. SB 13 will mirror federal law and apply the same human trafficking offense to all victims under age 18. It will provide another helpful provision to address the scourge of human trafficking.

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.