



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

TO: Mayor & City Council

FROM: City Councilwoman Rebecca Viagran

COPIES TO: Sheryl Sculley, City Manager; Leticia Vacek, City Clerk; Edward Benavides, Chief of Staff; Chris Callanen, Assistant to the City Council; Robbie Greenblum, City Attorney; John Peterek, Senior Management Analyst

SUBJECT: Implementation of a specialized SAPD Human Trafficking Task Force

DATE: August 12, 2014

Issue Proposed for Consideration

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Public Safety Committee:

Directing staff to and implement a SAPD Task Force designed to partner with Bexar County in order to establish an intelligence sharing partnership, develop a comprehensive strategy to address human trafficking, create new and/or use existing local enforcement tools to strengthen the identification, prosecution and punishment of traffickers with severe penalties, and develop a plan for communication outreach.

Specifically, the study should address the following:

1. Direction and development to form new SAPD human trafficking task force, and conduct mandatory training on human trafficking for law enforcement by partnering with Bexar County;
2. Target individual neighborhood corridors within Council Districts that have a history of prostitution and drug activity, and establish if there is any correlation linked to human trafficking;
3. Put into action a "Stop Human Trafficking" campaign promoting Public Service Announcements (PSA), and identify potential partners to include community-based organizations, delegate agencies, and media outlets to assist and help educate public on human trafficking and how to report it;
4. State and Federal legislative priorities that would assist the City in taking the necessary steps, and providing the tools to prosecute and punish traffickers.

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Brief Background

Human Trafficking is defined as recruiting vulnerable persons for the purpose of transporting, transfer, harboring, and/or controlling them to be engaged in forced labor and/or sex work for the purpose of exploitation. Victims can be women or men, young children, and teenagers.

It is estimated that 27 million men, women, and children worldwide remain trapped in bondage, by being forced and confined into involuntary servitude by traffickers, and Human

Trafficking is the world's second largest criminal enterprise behind the narcotics trade profiting an estimated \$32 billion a year industry.

According to The Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force Report 2012: Evidence suggests traffickers are taking advantage of the state's vast borders, intricate roadways, robust economy, booming tourism, and expansive agricultural industries.

In a 2011 report of the Texas Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights; Human Trafficking in Texas More Resources and Resolve Need to Stem Surge of Modern Day Slavery: Texas is widely considered a major destination and transit state for human trafficking. Interstate 10 is a major east-west Interstate Highway in the southern part of the United States. The length of Interstate 10 (I-10) crossing Texas is the longest continuous un-tolled freeway under a single authority in North America. (Links 3 major Texas cities: El Paso, San Antonio, Houston)

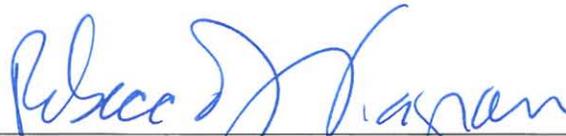
The city of San Antonio has seen a rise in the number of arrests in Human Trafficking. Last year U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said it rescued 330 victims, and investigators stated that 1 in 4 victims are moved down the I-10 corridor. *

With city wide support in combating any links between prostitution and drug activity, this task force partnership could assist in identifying, preventing, and averting future escalation of human trafficking in San Antonio, the state of Texas, and the United States.

*Kens5 news story posted 1/21/14

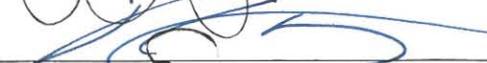
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Submitted for Council consideration
by:


Councilwoman Rebecca Viagran, District 3

Supporting Councilmember's Signatures (4 only)

District No.

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