

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1090

As Reported by House Committee On:

Criminal Justice & Corrections

Title: An act relating to the Task Force against the trafficking of persons.

Brief Description: Extending the Task Force against trafficking of persons.

Sponsors: Representatives Veloria, Roach, O'Brien, Bush, Lantz, Clements, Linville, Kenney, Boldt, Sullivan, Upthegrove, Chase, Darneille and Hudgins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 1/28/03, 2/7/03 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the Washington State Task Force Against the Trafficking of Persons indefinitely.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives O'Brien, Chair; Darneille, Vice Chair; Kagi and Lovick.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Mielke, Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; and Pearson.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

The 2002 Legislature established the Washington State Task Force Against the Trafficking of Persons. The Task Force consisted of the following persons (or their designees): the Director of the Office of Community Development; the Secretary of the Department of Health; the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services; the Director of the Department of Labor and Industries; and the Commissioner of the Employment Security Department. In addition, the Task Force included nine members, selected by the Director of the Office of Community Development, that represented the

public and private sector organizations that provide assistance to persons who are victims of trafficking. With the exception of travel expenses, all members of the Task Force served without compensation. Administrative and clerical support to the Task Force was provided by the Office of Community Development.

The Task Force was responsible for the following activities:

- measuring and evaluating the progress of the state's trafficking prevention activities;
- identifying federal, state, and local programs that provide victims of trafficking with services such as health care, human services, housing, education, legal assistance, job training or preparation, interpreting services, English as a second language classes, and victim's compensation; and
- making recommendations on how to provide a coordinated system of support and assistance to victims of trafficking.

The Task Force provisions expire March 1, 2003.

Summary of Bill:

The expiration date for the Washington State Task Force Against the Trafficking of Persons is eliminated and as a result the Task Force is extended indefinitely.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: Secretary of State Colin Powell has called human trafficking an appalling assault on the dignity of women, men, and children. He is the latest in a growing number of national leaders to condemn the practice of human trafficking on both the national and international level.

Human trafficking is the second largest form of trafficking in the United States (U.S.) This industry often involves spouses and fiances who are brought into the U.S. and are induced by force or fraud to be in relationships and later work in sex or labor industries. Many of these victims are brought into the U.S. often times to pay off a family debt.

The Task Force would like to continue the interagency cooperation that has developed within the Task Force to share and learn about the best practices that are out there in the field of trafficking and to continue the community interaction and awareness that has been established during the interim when the Task Force was meeting.

There are many programs around the state who have experience in locating trafficking victims and providing assistance to those victims. The Task Force would like to continue working with those groups. The Task Force would also like to continue studying the complex issue of trafficking and learn how to better cooperate with federal government officials to ensure that traffickers are actually prosecuted.

We need to continue the Task Force to better understand all types of trafficking and what we should be doing to reduce trafficking crimes.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Veloria, prime sponsor; Grace Huang, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Lonnie Johns-Brown, Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs; Madolyn Nichols, University of Washington Womens Center; and Bev Emery, Office of Crime Victims Advocacy.