



UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW • Suite 1150 • Washington, DC 20425 www.usccr.gov

August 8, 2017

Senator Larry Obhof
President
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Senator Kenny Yuko
Minority Leader
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Representative Clifford A. Rosenberger
Speaker of the House
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St
Columbus, OH 43215

Representative Fred Strahorn
Minority Leader
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator Obhof, Senator Yuko, Representative Rosenberger, and Representative Strahorn:

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is pleased to transmit our Ohio Advisory Committee's report *Human Trafficking and Civil Rights in Ohio*.

The Commission maintains 51 Advisory Committees - one for each state and the District of Columbia. The role of the Committees is to study civil rights issues in their communities and report findings and recommendations to the Commission. The Commission appreciates the Ohio Advisory Committee's focused attention on human trafficking.

The Commission requests that your office review the recommendations in the attached report, which can also be viewed at:

<http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/06-15-Human-Trafficking-and-Civil-Rights-Ohio.pdf>

The recommendations can be found on pp. 29-31 of the report, as well as in the stand-alone "Recommendations" document attached to this letter. In response to these recommendations, we advise that you take the steps necessary to protect civil rights in your jurisdiction.

We have similarly asked the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force to review the report.

The Commission appreciates your consideration of the report's recommendations, in the hope of improving civil rights. We look forward to hearing from you - after you have reviewed the report - on what actions you will take in response.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Lhamon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of the first name being a large, stylized "C".

Catherine E. Lhamon
Chair

cc: Office of Governor John Kasich

Encl.

Ohio Advisory Committee Report
Recommendations to the Ohio Legislature

August 3, 2017

Ms. Sophia Papadimos
Acting Coordinator
Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force
P.O. Box 182081
Columbus, OH 43218-2081

Dear Ms. Papadimos:

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is pleased to transmit our Ohio Advisory Committee's report Human Trafficking and Civil Rights in Ohio.

The Commission maintains 51 Advisory Committees - one for each state and the District of Columbia. The role of the Committees is to study civil rights issues in their communities and report findings and recommendations to the Commission. The Commission appreciates the Ohio Advisory Committee's focused attention on human trafficking.

The Commission requests that your office – and state agencies represented on the task force - review the recommendations in the attached report, which can also be viewed at:

<http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/06-15-Human-Trafficking-and-Civil-Rights-Ohio.pdf>

The recommendations can be found on pp. 29-31 of the report, as well as in the stand-alone "Recommendations" document attached to this letter. In response to these recommendations, we advise that you take the steps necessary to protect civil rights in your jurisdiction.

We have similarly asked the Ohio Legislature to review the report.

The Commission appreciates your consideration of the report's recommendations, in the hope of improving civil rights. We look forward to hearing from you - after you have reviewed the report - on what actions you will take in response.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Catherine E. Lhamon
Chair

Encl.

Ohio Advisory Committee Report
Recommendations to the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force

Human Trafficking and Civil Rights in Ohio

Recommendations to the Ohio Legislature

- Consistent with 42 other states, and the federal government, the Ohio Legislature should revise its human trafficking statutes such that proof of force, fraud, or coercion is not required in any case where a trafficking victim is under the age of 18 years.
- The Ohio Legislature should require that all healthcare, child welfare, and other appropriate human service providers licensed by the state receive regular training regarding identifying and responding to victims of human trafficking.
 - Providers included in this requirement may be identified as recommended by the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force.
 - Such training may be in accordance with or in expansion of that which has already been developed by The Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force.

Human Trafficking and Civil Rights in Ohio

Recommendations to Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force

- The Task Force should conduct a comprehensive study to identify any outstanding gaps in human trafficking related services, including dedicated housing, basic life- skills training, and medical and legal assistance in all counties throughout the state. As Ohio works to fill identified gaps in its servicing framework, a focus should be on building services that will help victims to become independent and reintegrate into society. Although most victims are minority women, additional services may also be required for victims who are men and boys, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning community.
- In addition to training materials already available to assist human service professionals in identifying trafficking victims, the Task Force should work to develop best practice guidelines for service providers relating to instituting victim- centered, trauma-informed programming.