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 Ms. Lubby Navarro, Board Member
 Ms. Mari Tere Rojas, Board Member

} Added

SUBJECT: ENDORSEMENT OF JANUARY AS NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED, AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Human trafficking involves the commercial exchange and exploitation of humans, involuntary labor, servitude, and debt bondage. Human trafficking is a growing worldwide problem rising to the third largest criminal activity in the world, with Florida ranking as the third in the nation in incidences of human trafficking.

January is national Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. As shared by President Obama, “This month, we rededicate ourselves to stopping one of the greatest human rights abuses of our time. Around the world, millions of men, women, and children are bought, sold, beaten, and abused, locked in compelled service and hidden in darkness. As Americans, we have long rejected such cruelty. We have recognized it as a debasement of our common humanity and an affront to the principles we cherish. And for more than a century, we have made it a national mission to bring slavery and human trafficking to an end.”

The implementation of Florida's Safe Harbor Act in 2012 has also helped to ensure the safety of child victims who have been trafficked for sex. The Safe Harbor Act allows children who have been rescued from prostitution the ability to receive assistance from child welfare professionals, instead of being placed in juvenile delinquency. This allows the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Department of Juvenile Justice, law enforcement and our local partners across the state to treat and help the victims of this abuse. In 2014 House Bill 7141 expanded the provisions of the Florida Safe Harbor Act by requiring the DCF to develop or adopt a screening instrument for the identification of sexually exploited children, service planning and placement. In addition, staff such as child protective investigators and case managers are required to have specialized training prior to working with minors that have been sexually exploited and foster homes or group homes desiring to care for sexually exploited children must meet minimum standards. Upon certification, these licensed settings are then identified as Safe Foster Homes or Safe Houses to serve as a placement option for sexually exploited children and young adults.

In local efforts, The School Board of Miami-Dade County passed Agenda Item H-20 in May 2012 endorsing a Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign. The District's commitment to bringing an end to human trafficking includes awareness training aimed at identifying at-risk behaviors and providing appropriate interventions in school communities throughout the county.

With the collaboration of community stakeholders and experts, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) developed strategies to promote awareness, share both on-line and local resources in the community, and analyze gaps in the areas of prevention and intervention. The information learned was then provided to administrators by way of a School Principal Briefing, which included the dissemination of the Human Trafficking Prevention Poster developed by the Students Services division of M-DCPS, along with comprehensive resource pages and fact sheets. Content is now available to all school personnel via the M-DCPS website.

The Miami-Dade Schools Police Department (M-DSPD), Investigative Division, under the leadership of Chief Ian Moffett continues to take proactive steps to assure that human trafficking is a priority issue. M-DSPD detectives that are detached to the State Attorney's Office Human Trafficking Unit, assist and investigate the growing trend of crime in human trafficking. The mission of the task force is to identify and rescue victims, create a coordinated law enforcement system to investigate and prosecute these crimes, and to deliver social, legal and immigration services to human trafficking victims in Miami-Dade Public Schools. The Task Force serves as a mechanism for communication and strategic collaboration between law enforcement agencies and service providers; coordinates community and school resources; promotes community and student awareness of human trafficking; and trains intermediary communities, and school personnel on human trafficking indicators and responses.

The District's awareness campaign serves to educate all employees on the issues of human trafficking and its impact on our children and community. As part of the awareness campaign, training has been provided to over one thousand Student Services Professionals including School Counselors, College Assistance Program Advisors, School Social Workers, TRUST Specialists, School Psychologists, SPED/Behavioral Specialists, School Nurses, Health Technicians, and Administrators. In addition, over one thousand students have viewed presentations aimed at educating and increasing awareness on these issues.

The District's Human Trafficking Campaign, Florida's Safe Harbor Act, and the President's proclamation are efforts that shed light on the growing problem of human trafficking and its impact and consequences to our youth. This item seeks to further commend local, state, and national efforts to increase awareness of human trafficking by designating January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month throughout Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Added

**ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR
DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorse January 2017 as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month throughout Miami-Dade County Public Schools.