

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 920

By Whitson

A RESOLUTION to recognize the Come Together Summit Against Sex/Human Trafficking in Franklin.

WHEREAS, human trafficking is a form of modern slavery that involves stealing freedom for profit; and

WHEREAS, human trafficking is a multi-billion dollar criminal industry that victimizes 24.9 million people around the world, most of whom are female; and

WHEREAS, in some cases, traffickers deceive, defraud, or physically force victims into providing commercial sex, and in others, victims are lied to, assaulted, threatened, or manipulated into working under inhumane, illegal, or otherwise unacceptable conditions; and

WHEREAS, the National Human Trafficking Hotline reported 10,949 human trafficking cases in the United States during 2018, a twenty-five-percent increase from 2017; these cases involved 23,078 victims/survivors, 5,859 potential traffickers, and 1,905 potential trafficking businesses; and

WHEREAS, shocking as these numbers are, they likely represent only a tiny fraction of the actual problem, because human trafficking is notoriously underreported due to the vulnerability of its victims; and

WHEREAS, we, as Tennesseans, have recognized the severity of this societal disease and reacted accordingly; Tennessee has been recognized as the best state in the nation for its response in combating human trafficking based upon its law enforcement stratagems, legislation, and survivor services; and

WHEREAS, the Come Together Summit Against Sex/Human Trafficking will be held in Franklin on April 6, 2020, to serve as a beacon of light for protecting the community against this heinous crime; and

WHEREAS, held in partnership with the Williamson County Sheriff's Department and Franklin United Methodist Church, the Come Together Summit will bring together law enforcement, nonprofit organizations, government officials and agencies, and victims to present a united front against human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, the keynote speaker will be Ilonka Deaton, a victim of sexual slavery as a teenager, who has written two inspirational books about her personal battle as a victim and survivor of human trafficking; in addition to relating her own experiences, she encourages fellow victims to share their stories as part of the fight to eliminate human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, events such as the Come Together Summit are important in the life of a community because they encourage civic engagement by people from all walks of life, raise public awareness about important issues, and promote understanding and empathy for our fellow human beings who are innocent victims of crime; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we recognize the Come Together Summit Against Sex/Human Trafficking in Franklin and commend its organizers and participants for their ongoing commitment to fighting and eradicating human trafficking in our State and nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.