



Resolution
of the
Board of County Commissioners
St. Louis County, Minnesota

Adopted on: December 18, 2012 Resolution No. 12-702

Offered by Commissioner: Sweeney

Support for Eliminating Sex Trafficking of Minnesota's Children

WHEREAS, to bolster actions by law enforcement, society should assist in eradicating such crimes by altering practices to make it more difficult for criminals to engage in sex trafficking in the state of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, county prosecutors in Minnesota have committed to treating children who are trafficked as victims and not as delinquents; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the Minnesota Legislature and Governor Mark Dayton enacted the Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Youth Act, which identified prostituted children as victims of sexual exploitation and called upon the state to create a framework for implementation of the changes inherent in the new law by August 1, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota counties can play a leading role in the fight against sex trafficking in Minnesota through their efforts around child protection, public health, human services, housing, law enforcement and prosecution and local county corrections and probation services; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that sexual exploitation - survival sex, prostitution, gang rape - affects as many as 40% of all runaway youth; and

WHEREAS, the Ramsey County Runaway Intervention Project has gained national attention as a "best results-oriented model" for working with runaway girls 15 and younger, including teen girls who have been prostituted; and

WHEREAS, St. Louis County, through its County Attorney's Office, has been at the forefront of this issue with Ramsey County and Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault (PAVSA) through presentations at the Women's Foundation and early support of the Safe Harbor initiative and resulting legislation, and by promoting the use of a victim-centered public health model with this population, rather than treating them as delinquents, providing an environment for children who have been trafficked as prostitutes to rebuild their self-esteem, their family life, and their future; and

WHEREAS, the "MN Girls Are Not for Sale" campaign has garnered state-wide support and national coverage for its efforts to identify and stop the sexual exploitation of girls in our communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the St. Louis County Board supports the position of the Association of Minnesota Counties in taking a leadership role in convening a statewide summit of county leaders around this issue to develop a victim-centered response to eliminate sex trafficking of our children.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the St. Louis County Board supports the provision of state and federal resources to implement a comprehensive statewide "No Wrong Door" intervention model including shelter, housing, and services for child sex-trafficking victims, as well as training for law enforcement and other frontline personnel.

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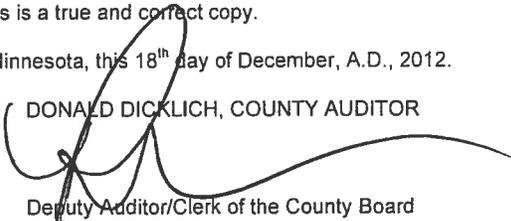
RESOLVED FURTHER, that the St. Louis County Board supports amending Minnesota's Safe Harbor Act to define all sex-trafficked children under the age of 18 as crime victims, not as juvenile delinquents.

Commissioner Sweeney moved the adoption of the Resolution and it was declared adopted upon the following vote:
Yeas – Commissioners Jewell, Dahlberg, Forsman, Sweeney, Raukar, and Chair Nelson - 6
Nays – None
Absent – Commissioner O'Neil - 1

STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office of County Auditor, ss.
County of St. Louis

I, **DONALD DICKLICH**, Auditor of the County of St. Louis, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing with the original resolution filed in my office on the 18th day of December, A.D. 2012, and that this is a true and correct copy.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE at Duluth, Minnesota, this 18th day of December, A.D., 2012.

By  **DONALD DICKLICH, COUNTY AUDITOR**
Deputy Auditor/Clerk of the County Board