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FOR A WORLD WITHOUT SLAVERY

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February 18, 2010

IN SUPPORT S4429, AN ACT Amending the Criminal Procedure Law in Relations to Victims of Sex Trafficking Convicted of Prostitution Offenses

On behalf of Polaris Projects more than 14,000 supporters, I urge your support of S4429, which proposes to vacate judgment against victims of sex trafficking for certain prostitution offenses.

Founded in 2002, Polaris Project has grown into a leading national organization committed to combating human trafficking within the U.S., providing direct intervention, survivor support, policy advocacy, public awareness, and community outreach to end the brutal crime of sex trafficking and labor trafficking – for minors, adults, citizens, and foreign nationals. We also operate the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline (1-888-3737-888).

In furthering our commitment to serving both domestic and international victims of human trafficking, Polaris Projects urges your strong support of S4429. Through our outreach, victim identification, crisis intervention, emergency services and victim protection efforts, Polaris Project has built a library of personal encounters with this brutal crime. In almost every case, victims of sex trafficking recount arrests and convictions for prostitution an expected part of the crime to which they were forced into.

Prostitution convictions, for victims of human trafficking, tell only half the story. They fail to include the brutal details of how one is forced or coerced to commit these acts. Survivors of sex trafficking crimes face an uphill battle in regaining control and rebuilding their lives. Many victims are in need of great psychological and physical assistance to overcome the extreme conditions for which they were subjected. Externally, victims of sex trafficking face social prejudice associated with prostitution convictions, and worry of never being free of the crime to which they were forced into. S4429 would empower victims of sex trafficking by allowing them to move on with their lives, and function in society without publication of past exploitation.

S4429 will provide a greater sense of security to human trafficking victims. **Polaris Project enthusiastically urges your strong support of S4429.**



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