

Office of the Mayor
Township of Bordentown

Proclamation

WHEREAS, human trafficking is a borderless crime against individuals that violates the most basic human rights and deprives victims of every shred of personal freedom; and

WHEREAS, human trafficking occurs when a person is recruited, harbored, obtained, or extorted through force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of sexual or labor exploitation, involuntary servitude, and other types of mental and physical abuse; and

WHEREAS, **human** traffickers target impoverished and marginalized children, woman and men, isolating them from society and supportive networks and exploiting them for personal and monetary gain; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations' International Labour Organization has estimated that at least 12.3 million adults and children worldwide are currently in forced labor, bonded labor, or forced prostitution; and it is estimated that more people are now harmed by Human Trafficking worldwide than have been at any other point in human history. Approximately 80% of the victims are women, girls and 50% are younger than age 18; and

WHEREAS, many victims trafficked into the U.S. do not speak or understand English and are unable to communicate to seek rescue. Under New Jersey and U.S. law, any person under 18 involved in the commercial sex industry is considered a Human Trafficking victim; and victims include U.S. citizens and documented immigrants; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that New Jersey is a prime location for Human Trafficking because it is a major national and international transportation corridor and a culturally diverse state; and

WHEREAS, human trafficking is modern-day slavery, a practice that is in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of liberty and human rights upon which our nation was founded; and

WHEREAS, on February 1, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln signed the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution. Once ratified, it officially outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude except as punishment for a crime; and

WHEREAS, Although the federal government and the State of New Jersey have enacted laws to prosecute human traffickers and protect the victim of human trafficking, traffickers use techniques to keep their victims enslaved that severely limits self-reporting and require broad public awareness of human trafficking issues for enforcement and prevention to occur; and

WHEREAS, The New Jersey State Constitution declares that all persons are by nature free and independent and have certain natural inalienable rights; and

WHEREAS, the people of New Jersey, regardless of political persuasion, creed, race, or national origin, stand together with the global community to protect the fundamental freedoms and rights of all persons, to fight the proliferation of human trafficking in all of its forms and to assist survivors of modern day slavery; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Bordentown stands committed to protecting human rights and individual freedom by eliminating human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, Township of Bordentown is resolved to support the goals and ideals of observing a National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness on January 11 of each year and to support all efforts by individuals, businesses, organizations, and governing bodies to raise awareness of and opposition to Human Trafficking.

WHEREAS, the township commends the work of the NJ Coalition against Human Trafficking for its statewide efforts to end human trafficking through education, advocacy, and assistance to survivors and to increase coordination and visibility of New Jersey's commitment to end human trafficking.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Steve Benowitz, Mayor of Bordentown Township, do hereby proclaim , January 11 of each year as: Human Trafficking Awareness Day in the Township of Bordentown, to raise awareness about the signs and consequences of human trafficking, to promote opposition to human trafficking in all its forms, and to encourage support for the survivors of human trafficking throughout the State of New Jersey and across the world to put an end to this criminal activity and restore freedom and dignity to its survivors.

Steve Benowitz

MAYOR