



TO: Judiciary Committee
FROM: Tom Venzor, Executive Director
Nebraska Catholic Conference
DATE: February 2, 2022
RE: LB1246 (Confidentiality for Victims of Sexual Assault & Sex Trafficking) (Support)

The Nebraska Catholic Conference advocates for the public policy interests of the Catholic Church and advances the Gospel of Life through engaging, educating, and empowering public officials, Catholic laity, and the general public.

From the outset of his pontificate, Pope Francis has been consistently vocal about the evils of human trafficking, which we all must combat. Pope Francis has condemned human trafficking with the strongest language, recognizing that trafficking is an “atrocious scourge,” and “aberrant plague,” and an “open wound on the body of contemporary society.” As he has further stated: “The human person ought never to be sold or bought as if he or she were a commodity. Whoever uses human persons in this way and exploits them, even if indirectly, becomes an accomplice of injustice.” In addition, in 2019, the Vatican published a document entitled “Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking” with the hope of Catholics—and all people of good will—better “understanding, recognizing, preventing, and eradicating the plague of the trafficking of persons, protecting the victims, and promoting the recovery of survivors.”

Thanks to Senators, like Senator Pansing Brooks, Nebraska has made significant strides in not only combatting human sex trafficking but also ensuring that we have a compassionate legal infrastructure in place that respects victims and survivors of sex trafficking. LB1246 would be another important contribution to this infrastructure.

No victim should have to be re-victimized because they have reported their story to law enforcement. Unfortunately, this is the experience of victims of sex trafficking prior to the point of charges being filed. By adopting LB1246, the Nebraska Legislature can help further ensure compassionate care for victims of sex trafficking, so that when they come forward they need not fear further intimidation, threats, or harm from offenders, and they need not fear undesired media contacts. LB1246 can be another small, yet significant step in the right direction of helping victims come forward so that we—as a state—can end this atrocious scourge.

We urge the Committee to advance LB1246 to General File. Thank you for your time and consideration.