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To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: David Tamisiea, Executive Director
Date: January 27, 2025
Re: SB 2220 — Training for Law Enforcement on Human Trafficking, Prostitution, and Commercial Exploitation of Children

The North Dakota Catholic Conference strongly supports common-sense legislation to fight against the scourge of human trafficking and the closely related crimes of prostitution and commercial exploitation of children. These intersecting crimes violate the dignity of the human person, the sanctity of human life, and fundamental rights of the human person.

All three of the last popes (John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have publicly decried human trafficking and called for its eradication and for the protection of its victims. Our two North Dakotan bishops, Bishop David Kagan and Bishop John Folda, have asked that addressing the problem of human trafficking be made a legislative priority.

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked for labor or commercial sex acts worldwide – including right here in North Dakota. It can happen in any community, and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Human trafficking often is hidden and goes unidentified. It is a crime that flourishes in darkness.

According to the federal Department of Homeland Security, one of the most effective means of combatting human trafficking is being able to identify its victims and recognize the crime. Law enforcement officers are on the front lines of fighting against human trafficking but frequently lack the education and training to recognize and stop this criminal activity.

SB 2220 aims to address this problem by implementing comprehensive guidelines and training for law enforcement so that they can become more effective in identifying and handling the interrelated crimes of human trafficking, prostitution, and commercial exploitation of children.

We respectfully ask for a **Do Pass** recommendation on Senate Bill 2220.