

2025 SENATE JUDICIARY

SB 2220

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2220
1/27/2025

Relating to the implementation of operational guidelines and training for law enforcement officers and state's attorneys addressing the crimes of human trafficking, prostitution, and the commercial exploitation of children.

10:30 a.m. Chair Larson opened the meeting.

Members present: Chair Larson, Vice Chairman Paulson, Senators: Castaneda, Cory, Luick, Myrdal, Braunberger.

Discussion Topics:

- Human trafficking law enforcement training
- Law enforcement training on exploitation
- Purpose of bill
- Labor trafficking
- Visa programs

10:30 a.m. Senator Robert Paulson, District 3, introduced the bill and submitted testimony #31747.

10:33 a.m. Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director, ND Family Alliance Legislative Action, testified in favor and submitted testimony #31691.

10:38 a.m. Stacy Schaffer, Executive Director, 31:8 Project, testified in favor and submitted testimony #31787.

10:44 a.m. Christopher Dodson, Co-Director, ND Catholic Conference, testified in favor.

10:45 a.m. Calvin Benson, Lobbyist, testified in opposition.

Additional written testimony:

Tod Fossetta, Founder, Archangel Ministries, submitted testimony in favor #31525.

Nicole L. Donaghy, Executive Director, ND Native Vote, submitted testimony in favor #31617.

Ashley L. Lies, Executive Director, ND State's Attorneys' Association, submitted neutral testimony #31687.

David Tamisiea, North Dakota Catholic Conference, submitted testimony in favor #32209.

10:49 a.m. Chair Larson closed the hearing.

Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk

1-25-25

Tod Fossetta
Archangel Ministries
620 Railroad Ave.
Homestead, MT 59242

Dear Senators and Representatives:

My name is Tod Fossetta and I am presenting myself to this committee to share testimony regarding SB 2220.

I have over 30 years experience working with domestic violence and sex trafficking victims, organizations, shelters and other support services. I am an Ambassador for Shared Hope International, a sex trafficking prevention organization with over 1000 trained ambassadors, and one of the nation's leading policy and political action teams. I have worked with organizations including the Pierce County Coalition for Domestic Violence and the Women's Crisis Shelter in Williston, ND. I have training through Shared Hope, Operation Underground Railroad and the Association for the Recovery of Children. I am a US Army Veteran, and since the murder of my sister in an act of domestic violence in 1984, I believe the Lord has called me to this vocation. I am the Founder of Archangel Ministries, through which I work with victims, organizations and church groups. One of my primary goals is to educate men on the dangers of pornography, buying sex and the effect it has on them, the community, and the women exploited for those uses.

I believe training is an essential tool in the fight against Human Trafficking. Being able to recognize the signs of trafficking as well as investigative and documentation training would make our law enforcement professionals much more effective. There is a broad spectrum of training objectives and availability in our nation. Some jurisdictions do HT training in their recruit training, while others have none in their departments.

There is a wide array of advocate-based training, such as Shared Hope International. These trainings are geared towards community involvement, social services, church organizations and education professionals. While effective in increasing awareness and understanding, they do not meet all the needs of law enforcement. In my opinion there is a disconnect between the two at times.

Law enforcement needs specialized training. They must be able to identify a situation, investigate with the intent of rescuing the victim and obtaining a conviction for the trafficker, intervene to remove the victim safely, and be able to treat the victim in a healthy manner until they can be placed with victim professionals. This is a lot to expect without extensive and recurring training. I can only assume that many of the smaller departments would be hard pressed to do this without State assistance, both in training access and funding.

I believe this bill would be a step in the right direction to more effectively address human trafficking in North Dakota. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Tod Fossetta



North Dakota Native Vote
919 S 7th Street
Suite 603
Bismarck, ND 58504

January 27, 2025

Testimony of Nicole Donaghy, Executive Director of North Dakota Native vote
in Support of Senate Bill 2220

Chairwoman Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

North Dakota Native Vote supports the passage of Senate Bill 2220 to establish operational guidelines and mandatory training for law enforcement officers and state's attorneys addressing human trafficking, prostitution, and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. This legislation constitutes a significant measure in protecting vulnerable individuals and ensuring that our criminal justice system addresses these severe crimes with both efficiency and empathy.

Human trafficking, prostitution, and the exploitation of children for commercial purposes are profoundly damaging offenses that impact victims, their families, communities, and society as a whole. These crimes, while widespread and severe, disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples, particularly women and children, who are especially vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

North Dakota has seen an increase in human trafficking, correlated with the rapid growth in certain industries, particularly due to the oil boom in the Bakken region. Studies and reports have shown alarming trends regarding the trafficking of people for sexual exploitation, and the rise of missing and murdered Indigenous women and children is especially concerning. According to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Indigenous women are 2.5 times more likely to experience violent crime than their white counterparts, and they make up a disproportionate number of trafficking victims in North Dakota. [Source: National Crime Information Center, "Missing Persons and Unidentified Persons Statistics," 2020.]

This stark statistic highlights the urgent need for comprehensive and specialized training for law enforcement, so officers can effectively identify, respond to, and investigate these crimes. The truth is that many of these victims are lured into situations where they become vulnerable to trafficking, and the existing gaps in training and resources have allowed this cycle to continue unchecked for far too long.

In 2019, the North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force released findings indicating an alarming rise in the commercial sexual exploitation of children, with many of the victims being Indigenous minors. This report revealed that traffickers often target communities with limited resources, such as Indigenous reservations, and that the complex nature of human trafficking in North Dakota requires specialized knowledge to combat effectively. [Source: North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force, "Report and Recommendations," 2019.]

The operational guidelines outlined in this bill will ensure that law enforcement agencies across the state develop specific, uniform protocols for handling crimes related to human trafficking, prostitution, and the commercial exploitation of children. These guidelines, which include clear procedures for investigation, victim assistance, and collaboration with community resources, are essential to combatting trafficking on a state level.



North Dakota Native Vote
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The training program, designed to be trauma-informed and victim-centered, will better equip law enforcement officers and state's attorneys to handle survivors and complex crimes. New recruits will undergo mandatory ten-hour training, with veteran officers receiving five hours of ongoing education. This ensures continued awareness, sensitivity, and expertise in handling trafficking and exploitation.

The inclusion of a victim-centered approach in the training will help ensure that survivors of trafficking, particularly Indigenous women and children, are treated with dignity and connected to the services they need to rebuild their lives. By addressing the systemic issues of underreporting, inadequate victim support, and jurisdictional challenges, we can make a significant difference in the lives of those affected.

The issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and children, as well as the rise in trafficking cases across the state, demands swift action. Indigenous communities have long faced disproportionate levels of violence and exploitation, and North Dakota must prioritize justice for these victims. The resources, training, and operational guidelines outlined in this bill are necessary steps toward addressing the crisis and providing law enforcement with the tools they need to better protect all residents of North Dakota.

I urge this committee to take immediate action in supporting this bill, not only to combat the rise of human trafficking but also to give a voice to those who have been silenced by exploitation.

I ask that you give a do pass recommendation to support the passage of Senate Bill 2220. Thank you for your time and consideration.

North Dakota State's Attorneys' Association

January 24, 2025

To: Judiciary Committee
Hon. Chairman Larson
Hon. Vice-Chair Paulson
Members of the Committee

RE: Senate Bill No. 2220

Chairman Larson, Vice-Chair Paulson, and Members of the Senate Judiciary:

The North Dakota State's Attorneys' Association (NDSAA) is submitting this letter as **NEUTRAL** to Senate Bill 2220 to bring up a few concerns with it as currently presented.

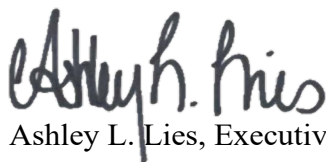
First, the Bill states it is related to training for law enforcement and state's attorneys addressing the crimes of human trafficking, prostitution, and the commercial exploitation of children. The actual Bill provides requirements for law enforcement training, but doesn't specify how or when state's attorneys are to be trained. Additionally, there is no fiscal note attached to the Bill, so we are concerned with how this training will be funded. Our Association operates on a very tight budget and it is likely financially impossible for us to bring in a trained speaker in all these areas.

Currently, there is no other North Dakota law that mandates specific training for state's attorneys. Our Association puts on two conferences each year where we bring in speakers on emerging trends and issues that affect our prosecution across the state. This has included trainings and speakers on trafficking and prostitution. To mandate it, however, would be difficult to implement. If it is a one-time training, how do we ensure new and old prosecutors are getting it? Unlike law enforcement, our new prosecutors do not attend a training class where this curriculum could easily be added and monitored. Their education is hands on in their job and through our bi-annual conferences.

Finally, as currently written, we believe the POST Board would be the ultimate decider in setting these training standards for us, which we oppose for obvious reasons as we would prefer our own Association have that oversight.

While we are grateful that the legislature joins us in recognizing the difficulties, and sadly increasing numbers, of these cases, we do not believe this Bill is the appropriate way to ensure this training is handled for state's attorneys.

On behalf of the North Dakota State's Attorneys:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ashley L. Lies". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Ashley L. Lies, Executive Director



Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2220

Mark Jorritsma, Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action
January 27, 2025

Good morning, Madam Chair Larson and honorable members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Mark Jorritsma, and I am the Executive Director of North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action. I am testifying on behalf of our organization in support of Senate Bill 2220 and respectfully request that you render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

Violating and taking the innocence of a child is simply evil, and I doubt any of you would disagree with that sentiment. Human trafficking, prostitution, and commercial exploitation of children (hereafter referred to simply as trafficking) do just that, and they are inextricably linked. However, as in many other cases of law, the question becomes, what do we do to stop it?

There are multiple elements to stopping trafficking, including sentencing guidelines, judicial processes, education for victims and others involved in these situations, and other facets. While NDFALA is working on all these aspects and more, we believe that law enforcement training is a critical part of the solution. The ability of law enforcement to appropriately address these situations is important to ensure that the victims obtain adequate and appropriate help, and make sure that the correct steps are undertaken to result in an effective criminal investigation.

How important is law enforcement training? The 2023 Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Commission Report established three recommendations for 2024. Of those three, two directly touched on the issues we are discussing.

Recommendation 1: Legal services and investigative resources must be strengthened to ensure labor trafficking cases progress from identification to prosecution.

Recommendation 3: Improving coordination and data sharing between law enforcement, service providers, and tribal communities will help streamline case management and victim support.

These recommendations and the body of evidence built by the North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force over the years all point to the need for more robust law enforcement programs focused on trafficking.

Law enforcement officers currently receive training in a number of ways, but two very important avenues are the initial training they receive at the academy, and the continuing education that is required for law enforcement officers (content varies by duties and by how much is dictated via a dept vs. left to officers). For both these training avenues, discussions with law enforcement academy graduates, more experienced ND law enforcement officers, and review of POST¹ courses all point to very limited training on trafficking issues, relative to other training they receive.

Law enforcement is a very difficult job, and we greatly appreciate the excellent service that ND law enforcement officers provide each year. POST and law enforcement agencies recognize that to maintain this excellence, education and training is important in an ever-changing legal and situational environment. For this reason, we believe that additional training for law enforcement officers to address trafficking crimes would be an investment in our state's welfare and be one avenue to help stem the tide of these horrible crimes.

For the aforementioned reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action respectfully requests that you render a "DO PASS" on Senate Bill 2220. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony, and I'd be happy to stand for any questions.

Mark Jorritsma
Executive Director
North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action

¹ ND Peace Officers Standards and Training program.

Good morning Madame Chair Larson and members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is Senator Bob Paulson, and I'm from District 3 in Minot.

This morning I bring to you SB 2220, a bill to allow for the training of law enforcement in the detecting, responding to, and investigating a crime involving human trafficking, prostitution, or commercial exploitation of children.

Since law enforcement officers are often the first point of contact for victims, it's important for them to be able to recognize the signs of trafficking. Additionally, it is critical that law enforcement agencies and personnel understand how to investigate trafficking and eliminate wrongful prosecution of child victims. And that is the purpose of this bill.

The organization that asked me to bring this bill will be testifying after me, and they are much more equipped to answer specific questions on the language of the bill.

Madam Chair and members of the committee, that concludes my testimony and I would be happy to stand for any questions.

Stacy Schaffer ~ Executive Director, 31:8 Project
318project.org
schaffer@318project.org
701.321.1061



In support of Senate Bill 2220

Chairwoman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stacy Schaffer, and I am the Founder and Executive Director of 31:8 Project, a Bismarck-based nonprofit dedicated to equipping and challenging society to proactively address human trafficking through education, advocacy, and awareness. I launched the nonprofit in 2015 but have been working in the anti-human trafficking field since 2006. 31:8 Project's work is accomplished through program areas including education, running the statewide Demand Reduction Program and human trafficking survivor mentorship. In 2024, we were privileged to provide services to over 60 survivors of human trafficking, 85% of whom were trafficked within North Dakota. Additionally, we delivered nearly 170 presentations statewide to a diverse range of audiences, including law enforcement, schools, healthcare providers, and community organizations. This year, we will host our *5th Annual Bakken Human Trafficking Summit* in Bismarck, with the goal of educating over 400 professionals and community members, including law enforcement and attorneys.

Regarding this bill, the two sectors that victims of human trafficking typically come into contact with while being trafficked is law enforcement and medical. Although it is important that all people be educated when it comes to the topic of human trafficking. I do believe it is important that law enforcement officers and state's attorneys receive this additional education as it is a crime that often goes unnoticed and can be difficult to detect if you are not educated on what to look for in these cases. Thank you all for your time. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



*Representing the Diocese of Fargo
and the Diocese of Bismarck*

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To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: David Tamsiea, 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.

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Judiciary Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2220
1/28/2025

Relating to the implementation of operational guidelines and training for law enforcement officers and state's attorneys addressing the crimes of human trafficking, prostitution, and the commercial exploitation of children.

11:14 a.m. Chair Larson opened the hearing.

Members present:

Chair Larson, Vice Chairman Paulson, Senators: Castaneda, Cory, Luick, Myrdal, Braunberger.

Discussion Topics:

- Attorney Generals Office Role
- Peace Officer License

11:20 a.m. Senator Castaneda moved a do not pass.

11:21 a.m. Senator Myrdal seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	N
Senator Ryan Braunberger	Y
Senator Jose L. Castaneda	Y
Senator Claire Cory	Y
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y

Motion Carried 6-1-0.

11:21 a.m. Senator Myrdal carried the bill.

11:22 a.m. Chair Larson closed the hearing.

Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2220 ([25.0955.01000](#))

Judiciary Committee (Sen. Larson, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (6 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2220 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.