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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO FACILITATE  
PROVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES TO NON-CITIZEN VICTIMS OF  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

1 WHEREAS, terrified and alone, many non-citizen victims of  
2 human trafficking escape to safety with only the clothes on  
3 their backs; and

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5 WHEREAS, without resources to secure housing, food, medical  
6 care, or other basic necessities, non-citizen victims of human  
7 trafficking struggle to survive in our communities; and

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9 WHEREAS, victim assistance and services for trafficked  
10 persons are constrained by factors such as legal provisions  
11 barring undocumented migrants from benefits and victim-related  
12 services; and

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14 WHEREAS, individuals that are trafficked but are not  
15 identified or recognized by law enforcement as victims of a  
16 severe form of trafficking may be expeditiously removed or  
17 detained in criminal detention facilities across the country;  
18 and

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20 WHEREAS, trafficking victims' fear of removal is exploited  
21 by traffickers to keep individuals isolated and under their  
22 control; and

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24 WHEREAS, federal law may protect trafficked persons by  
25 providing immigration status, permission to work, and possible  
26 United States permanent residence once the victim is certified  
27 as a severe victim of trafficking; and

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29 WHEREAS, once trafficked persons are identified,  
30 "certification" is a process by which trafficked persons are  
31 deemed eligible for benefits and services to the same extent as  
32 a refugee, namely federal and state benefits (including medical  
33 services), housing, legal services, protection, victim



WHEREAS, because certification often requires a considerable length of time to process, typically six months, there is the need for pre-certification victim services, from the time that individuals are identified as trafficked persons until they are certified by federal law enforcement, during which time trafficked persons may experience the greatest need for services; and

WHEREAS, trafficking victims are eligible for certain federally funded services, namely emergency medicaid, immunizations, and access to domestic violence shelters and other exempt services but they are ineligible for other federally funded services such as cash assistance programs or state funded comprehensive health care services; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2007, that the Department of Human Services is requested to:

- (1) Identify existing obstacles, in statute, rule, or policy, that limit or deny benefits to victims of trafficking; and
- (2) Conduct a needs assessment to identify appropriate social and financial services for victims of trafficking, by public and private agencies, until such time as the person secures a visa, certification, or a work authorization card from the Department of Homeland Security or other federal agency or is able to return to their country of origin, if they wish to do so; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services.

OFFERED BY:

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