



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2023

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**New Washington Bill Created by and for Adult Survivors of Human Trafficking
Passes the Legislature and Receives Governor's Signature**

Olympia, Washington – Today Governor Inslee signed Substitute Senate Bill 5114, a bill that was written specifically by and for survivors of adult sex trafficking. This bill will provide an infusion of funding for culturally responsive and survivor-centered programs that will support adults who have experienced sex trafficking in Washington.

The bill was sponsored by Senator Claire Wilson and Representative Tina Orwall, and it will provide funding for more healing and transition services for survivors in Washington state, including safety planning, housing, substance use disorder treatment, health services, legal advocacy, translation and interpretation services, education, employment support, outreach, and emergency financial assistance. At least one community-based organization will be funded to operate and service survivors in eastern Washington, and at least one organization in western Washington, but multiple agencies will be funded.

The bill was created by survivor leaders who formed a coalition in 2021 called Washington Against Sexual Exploitation ([WASE Forward](#)), which consists of 34 organizations who are working together to advocate for better policies to support adults who have experienced sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. Throughout the 2023 Washington State Legislative Session, the leaders of WASE Forward directly engaged state law makers and other key stakeholders to help them understand the unique needs of sex trafficking survivors who require healing services to support the recovery from the violence, trauma, and abuse that is prevalent in commercial sexual exploitation.

“This bill will open the door for avenues to create and enhance services for adult survivors of sex trafficking throughout our state,” said Jeri Moomaw, Executive Director of Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative, and co-founder of WASE Forward. “This is important because many survivors don't know that services exist and there are people available to support them through their journey to healing.”

WASE Forward is dedicated to supporting and uplifting survivors of sex trafficking in marginalized communities. This includes people from Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, as well as members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community. WASE Forward recommends that the funding is used to create culturally responsive programming that can support survivors specifically in communities that are disproportionality harmed by human trafficking.

“The cultural response is an equitable response to reach and provide tailored made services to underserved communities,” explained Nature Carter, a co-founder of WASE Forward and a leader in the African American community who works to continue to reach marginalized communities to address intersections of violence.

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About WASE Forward

Washington Against Sexual Exploitation (WASE Forward) is a coalition of 34 agencies that was formed in 2021 to bring together leaders from many organizations to work together to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of vulnerable people in Washington state. The purpose of WASE Forward is to promote policies and practices that enhance support and justice for people with lived experience of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. WASE Forward is guided by a diverse leadership team including professionals with program, research, and lived experience of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. For more information, visit waseforward.org.