



PROCLAMATION

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

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NORTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL BRANCH

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH JANUARY 2026

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS DAY JANUARY 13, 2026

WHEREAS, HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS A PUBLIC SAFETY, PERSONAL LIBERTY, AND PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE WHICH DENIES THE HUMAN DIGNITY AND FREEDOM OF VICTIMS REGARDLESS OF RACE, RELIGION, GENDER, AGE, CITIZENSHIP, OR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS;

WHEREAS, THE CRIME OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING OCCURS WHEN A PERSON IS RECRUITED, HARBORED, OBTAINED, OR TRANSPORTED THROUGH FORCE, FRAUD, OR COERCION FOR THE PURPOSE OF SEXUAL OR LABOR EXPLOITATION, INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE, OR DEBT BONDAGE, OR WHEN ANY COMMERCIAL SEX ACT IS COMMITTED UPON A PERSON WHO HAS NOT REACHED 18 YEARS OF AGE; AND

WHEREAS, THE NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE AS WELL AS PARTNER AGENCIES WITHIN NORTH CAROLINA NOTE A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN REPORTS REGARDING FAMILIAL TRAFFICKING, AND ONGOING VULNERABILITIES OF FAMILIES DUE TO THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC AND OTHER SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS; AND

WHEREAS, THE NORTH CAROLINA INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN (ICAC) TASK FORCE REPORTS AN INCREASE IN CYBER TIPS FROM A TOTAL OF 26,771 IN 2023 TO 52,585 IN 2025; AND

WHEREAS, THE NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION, AS THE LEGISLATIVELY MANDATED LEADER OF ANTIHUMAN TRAFFICKING EFFORTS IN THE STATE, AND THE NORTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL BRANCH CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT EFFORTS ACROSS THE STATE AND REGION TO BUILD AWARENESS OF THE MANY FORMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, TO PROTECT AND SERVE VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS, AND TO INCREASE THE PREVENTION AND PROSECUTION OF THIS EGREGIOUS CRIME; AND

WHEREAS, THE NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION IS CHARGED WITH EXAMINING AND COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING; FUNDING AND FACILITATING RESEARCH; CREATING ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES; INFORMING AND EDUCATING LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL, SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC; SUGGESTING NEW POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND LEGISLATION; DEVELOPING REGIONAL RESPONSE TEAMS; AND IDENTIFYING GAPS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT OR SERVICE PROVISION AND RECOMMENDING SOLUTIONS; AND

WHEREAS, HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECOGNIZE THAT ALL NORTH CAROLINIANS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE PREVENTION OF THIS CRIME AND IN THE CREATION OF SOLUTIONS THAT ADDRESS IT AND SERVE VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS; AND

NOW, THEREFORE, I DO HEREBY PROCLAIM JANUARY 2026 AS "HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH" AND JANUARY 13, 2026 AS "HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS DAY," FOR THE JUDICIAL BRANCH OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

PAUL NEWBY, CHIEF JUSTICE
SUPREME COURT of NORTH CAROLINA