

Hello, Chair, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee. My name is Chelsey Passon, and I am a **lived experience expert and survivor leader**, with my own history of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking occurring for nearly a decade before I was able to get away from my trafficker and eventually exit the commercial sex industry. I currently serve as the Manager of Communications at Safety Compass, a survivor-led, non-profit, advocacy agency, serving survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Oregon. I have also previously held positions, within our organization, as the Clackamas County Human Trafficking MDT Coordinator, as well as a confidential advocate providing on-scene crisis response for individuals experiencing commercial sexual exploitation and/or human trafficking. As of December 2025, Safety Compass has served over 2300 of those most vulnerable in our community.

Through these lenses, I thank you all for the opportunity to write today in **support of House Bill 4157**.

This bill provides a pathway to justice for survivors in the most dangerous and even lethal of circumstances. The tangible outcomes that will result from the passing of this bill- providing a tool for our criminal justice system to better hold perpetrators accountable, that is, the traffickers who are victimizing our children, marginalized populations, and every other vulnerable persons we know them to target, are long overdue.

We have seen the anti-trafficking movement and the laws surrounding this movement take years to begin to recognize the violence that the commercial sex industry is founded upon. Our systems are just now starting to perceive and respond to what survivors of this industry have been saying for years: **that those providing sex in the industry are overwhelming victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, rape, and have no path to justice or safety**. We have seen time and time again many survivors who have spoken out or may want to speak out against their trafficker but are afraid to because of retribution, or because of witness tampering or the many violent dynamics we see in the commercial sex industry. This bill helps address these issues.

HB 4157 offers sufficient protections for anyone engaging in providing commercial sex who is not also engaging in trafficking, as expert statements alone will not suffice to meet a legal standard and would need to be backed up with evidence. As our human trafficking task forces

across the state have begun to better identify and engage with survivors, our systems are becoming more trauma-informed in the fact that they have moved away from penalizing those we recognized to be victimized by the commercial sex industry, and instead have built or are building infrastructures to get those who most need it help to exit the industry and start their lives over. There are many individuals that are experiencing harm right now, at this exact moment, who do not have the freedom to come to a meeting with other survivors to express their opinion, stand in front of the state legislature or submit testimony, or even pick up a phone to call their representative. **Those voices deserve representation, and passing HB 4157 is a very important step that will help provide that.**

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.