



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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PATRICK YOES  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JIM PASCO  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

28 February 2020

The Honorable Sherrod C. Brown  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn III  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Amy J. Klobuchar  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert J. Portman  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thomas R. Tillis  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne G. Feinstein  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Brown, Cornyn, Klobuchar, Portman, Tillis, Blumenthal and Feinstein,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong support for S. 2197, the “Protecting Rights of Those Exploited by Coercive Trafficking (PROTECT) Act.”

Human trafficking is a scourge on our society. One aspect of human trafficking—the deliberate use of drugs and addiction by traffickers to control and exploit vulnerable victims—is unfortunately, under addressed in current law.

Data shows that traffickers introduce or exploit substance abuse and addiction as a means to psychologically and physically control their victims. In some cases, human traffickers force or coerce victims to use drugs, creating or furthering dependency, as a means of forcing the victims into prostitution or domestic servitude. In other cases, human traffickers—with the promise of drugs to individuals already struggling with substance abuse—keep these victims trapped in a cycle of addiction. As a result, the victims’ drug dependency is exploited as a means to “pay” them to engage in criminal activity.

The legislation amends existing human trafficking law to specify the use of drugs or illegal substances to cause a person to engage in a commercial sex act or forced labor constitutes a form of coercion. Under this new provision, both traffickers and facilitators of human trafficking are

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held accountable for causing and or furthering an individual's addiction for the purpose of forced labor. Your bill takes a survivor-informed approach to prevent further criminalization of trafficking victims. This includes an affirmative defense to protect covered victims of trafficking from prosecution under this provision, while still ensuring that those profiting from criminal acts cannot use their addiction to immunize themselves from genuine criminal culpability.

On behalf of the more than 350,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I am proud to offer our support for this legislation. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Executive Director, Jim Pasco, in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "PATRICK YOES", with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Patrick Yoes  
National President