

Supporters of the Stop, Observe, Ask and Respond (SOAR) to Health and Wellness Act

“As one of the largest service providers in the country exclusively serving survivors of modern slavery, CAST’s experience in the field has shown that medical and mental health providers are key individuals in early identification and prevention of modern slavery. CAST strongly supports the reintroduction of the SOAR Act, which is an important legislative step in ensuring our medical professional have the tools they need to best assist survivors.” – **Stephanie Richard, Policy & Legal Services Director, Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (CAST)**

“ECPAT-USA applauds Senator Heidi Heitkamp for her continued supports of victims of human trafficking through the reintroduction of the SOAR to Health and Wellness Act. Medical professionals are at the front line in the fight against trafficking, and it is essential that they are trained and have protocols in place to identify, treat and assist in the recovery and restoration of victims of trafficking.” – **Carol Smolenski, Executive Director, ECPAT-USA**

“In supporting the SOAR Act, Shared Hope recognizes the critical importance of training for health care workers who are often in a unique position to identify child sex trafficking victims and help bring an end to their cycle of exploitation.” – **former Congresswoman Linda Smith (1995-1998), Founder & President, Shared Hope International**

“Healthcare professionals are on the front lines of identifying human trafficking victims. That is why it is essential that training and technical assistance is provided to better equip them to respond to all forms of human trafficking. We commend Senators Heitkamp and Collins for introducing this bill and for their leadership on combating human trafficking.” – **Melysa Sperber, Director, Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST)**

“HEAL Trafficking, a national interdisciplinary network of over 800 professionals united to heal the world of trafficking through a public health lens, is pleased to offer our support of Heitkamp’s Stop, Observe, Ask and Respond (SOAR) to Health and Wellness Act. We believe health care professionals have a unique opportunity to intervene in the human trafficking cycle of exploitation and should be equipped to respond. This act is a first step in ensuring all trafficked patients who walk through the doors of health facilities are identified and cared for.” – **Hanni Stoklosa, Executive Director, HEAL Trafficking (Health, Education, Advocacy, Linkage)**

“Ensuring health care professionals are adequately trained to identify and support victims of human trafficking is critical to stopping this abuse. The bill sponsored by Senators Heitkamp and Collins will extend the important work of the HHS’s program to ensure that nurses, doctors, and other health professionals get comprehensive training to help those most in need.” – **Keeli Sorensen, Director of Government Relations and Public Policy, Polaris**

“Rights4Girls is proud to support the SOAR Act, legislation that will expand training and technical assistance to healthcare providers throughout the country to better identify and respond to victims of human trafficking. Given the hidden nature of this crime, healthcare professionals are uniquely positioned to help us identify, protect, and better serve trafficking survivors in the U.S. We applaud Senators Heitkamp and Collins on the introduction of this important legislation and thank them for their leadership on this issue.” – **Yasmin Vafa, Executive Director, Rights4Girls**

“Youth and young adults experiencing homelessness are at an exceptionally increased risk of becoming victims of trafficking. The SOAR Act will provide healthcare and related providers with the training to recognize and support potential trafficking survivors. As a public education and policy advocacy organization representing over 300 organizations that work on the front lines every day to prevent and respond to youth homelessness, NN4Y supports the reintroduction of the SOAR Act.” – **Darla Bardine, JD, Executive Director, National Network for Youth**