



Women's Trucking Federation of Canada
303-900 Guelph St
Kitchener, ON
N2H 5Z6
548-288-4322

May 3, 2023

To: **Chair Karen Vecchio, MP**
Standing Committee on the Status of Women

The Women's Trucking Federation of Canada (WTFC) would like to start by commending the members of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women for the important work and focus that is being placed on **Human Trafficking of Women, Girls, and Gender Diverse People**.

Introduction

My name is Shelley Walker and I am the founder/chief executive officer of the Women's Trucking Federation of Canada. I've been involved with the transportation industry for over 30 years. Early in my career I was a school bus driver before entering commercial trucking. My driving career has taken me all over North America. Several years ago, I met Natalia Kusendova MPP for Mississauga Centre. It was during these discussions that I felt the Canadian Trucking Industry could help bring more awareness to this heinous crime. This was the starting point for the #KnowHumanTrafficking Campaign for WTFC.

#KnowHumanTrafficking Campaign

In 2020 WTFC launched the first #KnowHumanTrafficking trailer. Since then, we have 4 more on the road, as well as 5 tanker trailers spreading awareness of Human Trafficking. On May 10th we are launching a new trailer in London, ON, and have 2 more coming up later in May. These trailers are wrapped in partnership with Ontario Crime Stoppers and Canada Crime Stoppers.

In 2021 WTFC received funding from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to create an online training course for Professional Drivers. We partnered with Timea Nagy from Timea's Cause on this project, we firmly believe survivor led training is extremely beneficial. This is an online free training course available through the Trucking Human Resources Sector Council Atlantic (THRSC) online training platform. It's also available on CarriersEdge, the largest Trucking Industry training platform.

In 2022 the Honorable Caroline Mulroney Minister of Transportation Ontario announced at our annual conference that Human Trafficking Training will become a mandatory component of entry level training for new drivers. We had been championing the Ontario Government since 2019 to include this in entry level training.

The #KnowHumanTrafficking campaign is a public awareness campaign. " Know how to SPOT it and Together we can STOP it " Every trailer launch we invite local police and services providers to address the public in attendance. We also invite media to attend to help spread awareness. This is a free event. We do not offer front line or survivor services but instead direct the public who to contact.

Areas of Concern

- Lack of shelters, housing and supports for survivors.
- Lack of financial supports for survivors
- Lack of life skills training, education for Survivors.
- Survivor's voices not being heard.
- Criminal records that prevent survivors from moving forward.
- Lack of Mandatory Human Trafficking Awareness training across Canada
- Inconsistent messaging the public receives on Human Trafficking
- Lack of knowledge/information within our school systems including transportation partners
- Lack of Police and judicial system training
- Longer sentences for Traffickers are needed to hopefully denture others.

Recommendations

WTFC strongly believes that more investments are needed to coordinated preventative and educational measures around human trafficking, especially at airports, truck stops, services/rest areas and other transportation hubs.

Establish a national human trafficking database that provides access to information on offenders, and survivors. Currently, law enforcement agencies use different tracking systems with no standardization or data sharing mechanism between jurisdictions.

Establish funding that goes beyond the three-year model to ensure stability in ongoing programs, which will generate greater outcomes.

Further invest in awareness, education, and prevention campaigns around human trafficking, including encouraging provincial adoption of human trafficking curriculum for school boards/employers .

Work with the provinces to better coordinate the national and provincial human trafficking strategies and funding programs to address existing gaps.

Provide funding for mobile education trailers that can get into remote areas across Canada.

Changes to the criminal justice system to ensure Survivors aren't punished the rest of their lives with a criminal record. This continues to victimize them instead of giving them a chance at a life.

Conclusion

We are all responsible to do our part in spreading awareness of this heinous crime. We owe survivors the right to live a new life by providing the supports and services they need. We are grateful for the Committee's time and consideration of this brief on human trafficking. We are willing to provide further details and happy to engage in any further discussions. Please contact Shelley Walker at shelleyu@wtfc.ca , Samantha Clarke at samanthac@wtfc.ca or Fiona Stone at fionas@wtfc.ca

Resources

Website:

[knowhumantrafficking.com](https://www.knowhumantrafficking.com)

Video we created :

https://youtu.be/_3PFpooKYV0

News Articles:

<https://toronto.citynews.ca/2021/09/03/mandatory-training-truckers-human-trafficking/>

<https://roadwarriornews.com/natt-wraps-know-human-trafficking-trailer/>