

April 11, 2023

Re: AB 964 (Ortega) – State contracts: certification process-SUPPORT

Dear Chairperson Petrie-Norris:

We write writing in support of AB 964 (Ortega), which would enhance current protections against human trafficking in California’s procurement policies by requiring that any company that contracts with the State takes specified measures to prevent human trafficking.

As the Ambassadors tasked with guiding the United States’ response to this heinous crime, we confronted these issues across political lines. As a result of that collaborative bipartisan spirit, the federal government has updated its own measures to protect its supply chains from human trafficking, forced labor, and forced commercial sex. Other countries (and major states, such as New South Wales) have followed suit on recognizing the power of procurement to address modern slavery in a manner that provides a strong market incentive to improve business practices.

Existing statutory measures -- adopted in 2007 – seek to prevent human trafficking in California’s procurement supply chains, where raw materials and labor often cross international borders. However, these measures are outdated. Over the last 10 years, a greater understanding of the more detailed measures necessary to prevent human trafficking globally has been developed, especially with regard to subcontractors and recruitment of migrant workers.

Already a global leader and economic force, California can have a significant impact on forced labor and human trafficking globally by updating its procurement policies. California’s leadership can help set the standards for fair working conditions and create a better model for private sector companies to exercise responsible and just business practices in their own supply chains.

For these reasons, we urge your “aye” vote on AB 964. If you have any questions or concerns, or if you or your staff would like to discuss further, Ambassador C.deBaca can coordinate. He can be reached at (703) 470-1171 or amb@chamberslopez.com.

Sincerely yours,

Ambassador (ret.) Nancy Ely-Raphel
(2001-2003)

Ambassador (ret.) Mark P. Lagon
(2007-2009)

Ambassador (ret.) Luis C.deBaca
(2009-2014)

Ambassador (ret.) Susan P. Coppedge
(2015-2018)

Ambassador (ret.) John Cotton Richmond
(2018-2021)