

Liz Ortenburger

Chief Executive Officer

SafeNest

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March 10, 2025

The Honorable Assemblywoman Marzola

RE: Support for Assembly Bill 299

Dear Assemblywoman Marzola,

On behalf of SafeNest, I am writing to express our strong support for Assembly Bill 299. As a leading organization dedicated to supporting survivors of domestic violence and sex trafficking, we see firsthand the devastating impact of these crimes and the systemic failures that have allowed traffickers and buyers to exploit victims with little to no accountability.

Every day, we work with individuals who have endured the trauma of being trafficked by a family member, intimate partner (often referred to as a "Romeo" trafficker), or another relational figure. These survivors bear the lifelong scars of their exploitation—physical, emotional, and legal—while those who fuel the demand for trafficking, the buyers (Johns), often escape any real consequence. This lack of accountability perpetuates the cycle of exploitation and further victimizes the individuals we serve.

AB 299 recognizes the critical need to address demand in order to dismantle sex trafficking networks. By instituting a mandatory arrest policy for buyers, this bill makes it clear that those who purchase sex from trafficking victims are not mere bystanders but active participants in an exploitative system. Holding buyers accountable is one of the most effective ways to combat trafficking, and we fully support this essential step in ensuring justice for survivors.

SafeNest stands in full support of AB 299 and urges its swift passage. We appreciate your leadership in prioritizing this crucial issue, and we welcome any opportunity to collaborate in efforts to protect and uplift survivors.

Thank you for your time and commitment to addressing sex trafficking in our state. Please feel free to contact me at 702-821-2747 if we can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Liz Ortenburger

CEO

SafeNest