2019 Bill Highlights

As of 4/1/2019

SB 982 & HB 259 – Human Trafficking Education in Schools
/Comprehensive Health Education

Sponsors: Senator Thurston Jr. (D - Fort Lauderdale) & Representative Williams (D - Fort Lauderdale)

Target Population: Students in public education systems who are at risk of being recruited by a human trafficker or know people at risk, victims of human trafficking, and students who will be able to spot signs of human trafficking after having learned more about the issue.

Summary: Changes the health education curriculum in public middle and high schools to include education on the dangers and warning signs of human trafficking. Requires health education to include techniques for both teachers and students to recognize and respond to child abuse. Students may opt out of this curriculum with written consent from a parent.
How do the Bills Differ?

- HB 259 & SB 982 are identical.

**Impact:** Florida ranks 3rd in the nation in calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Minors are especially vulnerable to exploitation. Teaching children to recognize the signs of human trafficking is critical to addressing the issue in Florida. Nationally, 1 out of every 5 children are at risk of being sexually exploited. In Florida, this equates to approximately 552,000 children at risk. Providing children with the tools to identify potential trafficking situations and to avoid becoming victims of exploitation is a crucial step in combating the prevalence of human trafficking and helping victims gain access to the services they need.

The Children’s Campaign supports this bill which is crucial to give children the resources they need to protect themselves and their peers from becoming victims of trafficking, and to report potential trafficking situations when they encounter them.