

An act to help

Vulnerable Youth in Minnesota

The Stable Housing and Support Services for Vulnerable Youth Bill

THE NEED FOR STABLE HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES:

Youth who run away or are homeless often face a variety of challenges, including family violence, abuse, relationship violence, chemical health problems, poverty... and their circumstances often make them particularly vulnerable to predators looking to exploit them. Immediate access to help protects them from violence and exploitation by providing stability and customized care to assist them in reaching goals, reuniting with family members, and preparing for the next chapter in their lives as productive and engaged citizens of their communities. This bill will help improve access to services for these vulnerable youth.

EARLY INTERVENTION CAN BE CRITICAL:

Half of women in north Minneapolis who recently traded sex started (on average) at age

13

From the Minnesota Human Trafficking Task Force

50

Percent of women in prostitution who have reported being physically assaulted by sex purchasers (their “johns”).

Every dollar invested in prevention and early intervention to avoid sex trafficking has a return-on-investment benefit of

\$34

These statistics help illustrate why early intervention is so critical and make such a difference in the future lives of youth and for the community.

HOMELESSNESS AND INCREASED RISK FOR TRAFFICKING:

Nationally, approximately 1 in 30 youth ages 13-17 experience homelessness over a 12-month period, according to **Voices of Youth Count**, an initiative of **Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago**. Tubman and other area youth-serving organizations participated in this study. In addition, young parents face 3 times the risk of homelessness compared to non-parenting peers, and youth homelessness rates are consistent across rural and urban areas alike.

While youth are targeted for exploitation and trafficking everywhere — online, through the commercial sex market, and on the streets — youth who are on the street report that they are approached for sex within an hour, and in some areas of the metro, much faster.

Despite growing awareness of these issues and increased efforts to fight sex trafficking in Minnesota, there continues to be a need for services: specifically, long-term stable housing and support housing for youth, particularly ages 13-17, who often have difficulty finding other trusted and flexible options for housing.

Safe Journeys

Program for youth ages 13-24



Stable housing and supportive services for vulnerable youth who have experienced violence, trafficking, and homelessness

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

The Safe Journeys youth program at Tubman includes stable housing, safety planning, and individualized strengths-based support in areas including education, parenting, legal services, career planning, and other goals.



GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Youth have opportunities to develop skills, enhance their personal safety, and find creative solutions to their challenges to prepare them for the next chapter in their lives.

PERSONAL GOALS

Youth work with advocates to determine personal goals, including gaining education, finding a job and determining a long-term career path, reuniting with family members, and strengthening their independence.



24-HOUR SUPPORT

Tubman has staff available for support 24 hours a day, and can work with every member of the family to support reunification, help people learn new skills, and increase safety and stability for all.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

The cost of serving one young person in Safe Journeys is \$173 per day, compared to an average cost of \$287 per day to incarcerate juveniles in the justice system. By working with youth to change the trajectory of their lives, the entire community benefits.



As a nonprofit organization with more than 40 years experience serving victims of trauma, Tubman supports the Stable Housing and Support Services for Vulnerable Youth Act.

Since the Safe Journeys program opened in August 2015, 181 youth and their children have found safety, reached their goals, reunited with family, and regained new hope in their future. **A review of clients served at Safe Journeys showed that 45% were younger than 17.** Approximately half are young parents, and they came to Tubman from Ramsey, Hennepin, Dakota, Anoka, and other counties.

Many more in this age group were turned away and unable to access other programs.

The Stable Housing and Support Services for Vulnerable Youth Act will provide needed services for our community's most vulnerable youth, and help reduce barriers so they can access the services they need.

ABOUT TUBMAN: *Each year Tubman helps nearly 25,000 people of all ages and all genders who have experienced relationship violence, sexual assault and exploitation, elder abuse, addiction, and other forms of trauma. We provide safe shelter, legal services, mental and chemical health counseling, youth programs and community education. To get help, call our 24-hour crisis & resource line at 612-825-0000. To give help, call 612-825-3333, or visit www.tubman.org to learn more.*