

City of Kingsport Proclamation

Whereas, human trafficking occurs when a person is recruited, enticed, harbored, transported, provided, purchased, or obtained through force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose performing labor or providing services (labor trafficking) or engaging in commercial sex acts (sex trafficking); and,

Whereas, it is estimated that approximately 27.6 million people are trafficked around the world and as many as 2,100 in East Tennessee alone; and,

Whereas, human trafficking erodes personal safety, dignity, and liberty as well as the health and safety of communities at large; and,

Whereas, human trafficking does not discriminate based on age, sex, race, color, or national origin, but is, however, grounded in the inequitable conditions of relationships and society and disproportionately affects vulnerable individuals and marginalized communities; and,

Whereas, the need is great to remove the veil of secrecy that allows human trafficking to thrive, disrupt the systems it depends upon to flourish, and mobilize community support around survivors of human trafficking and help them as they seek to recover and rebuild their lives; and,

Whereas, a unified response by allied professionals, law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, victims service providers, healthcare professionals, volunteers, and others is needed to provide safety, justice, and healing to survivors, hold offenders accountable, and promote the welfare of the community; and,

Whereas, the Tennessee Counter-Trafficking Alliance, through the Community Coalition Against Human Trafficking in East Tennessee, exists to educate Tennesseans about the realities and pervasiveness of human trafficking, foster collaborative intervention and prevention efforts, provide comprehensive, trauma-informed aftercare services to survivors, and advocate for more proactive legislation; and,

Whereas, during Human Trafficking Prevention Month and throughout the year, the City of Kingsport is provided an opportunity to celebrate the collaboration and work that has been done while rededicating ourselves to all that is still left to do, to reflect upon and honor the resilience, perseverance, and courage of survivors, and to urge everyone to recognize that we all have an active part to play in protecting the most vulnerable in our communities and ensuring survivors receive the care, support, and services they need.

Now, Therefore, I, Paul W. Montgomery, Mayor of the City of Kingsport, and on behalf of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Kingsport, do hereby proclaim January 2026 as

Human Trafficking Prevention Month

in the City of Kingsport and encourage all citizens to remember victims and survivors of human trafficking and reaffirm our commitment to end their exploitation in communities across the City of Kingsport.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Kingsport, Tennessee, to be affixed this the 20th day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-six.

Paul W. Montgomery, Mayor