Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislator Coker to Lead Review of County Services Relevant to the Elimination of Sex Trafficking

Public Safety Committee, Tuesday, May 25th, 5:00 pm

New City, NY (May 21, 2010) – Rockland County Legislator Connie Coker has requested a review of the County services that may be utilized or available to identify and eliminate sex trafficking in Rockland, as well as a review of services to assist the victims of traffickers. The discussion will take place at the Tuesday, May 25, 2010, 5:00 p.m. meeting of the Legislature's Public Safety Committee. Coker will review the issues with representatives from various county departments.

"A recent local event has once again shed light on this shocking issue," explained Legislator Coker, "and it demands our attention. This inhumanity, a form of modern-day slavery, is not to be tolerated. I would like to hear about the resources the County has to address this issue. We have a responsibility to support or take action to eliminate this repulsive exploitation of vulnerable individuals."

Legislator Jay Hood, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, supports the review. Hood said, "I hope to learn who is vulnerable to falling prey to traffickers and what can be employed to protect them from becoming victims. As the recent incident illustrates, this is not just an urban problem. One may think so, but, as we have learned, it reaches into all of society."

Legislators Hood and Coker have invited representatives from local organizations to speak about their work to bring awareness to the issue through outreach, to provide relief and a safe haven for the victims and to advocate for stronger laws and enforcement.

Legislative Chairwoman Harriet Cornell who had successfully called for state legislation to strengthen laws against traffickers applauded this review. She said, "Victims are often victimized again because they are too frightened to reveal the traffickers. Bringing this issue into the light of day is exceedingly helpful."

The Public Safety Committee will meet in the Chambers of the Rockland County Legislature, 11 New Hempstead Rd., New City, NY. All committee meetings are open to the public.

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