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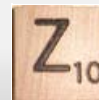
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Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden vows to continue fight against human trafficking

Published: Saturday, July 10, 2010, 7:07 PM Updated: Sunday, July 11, 2010, 8:18 AM



Bobby Allyn, The Oregonian

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Arkasha Stevenson/The Oregonian

Jessica Richardson, of Portland, shared her story as a survivor of human trafficking Saturday in Shemanski Park in downtown Portland. "I have been a slave, but today I am free," she told the crowd.

Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., urged community activists and state policymakers at a rally Saturday in downtown Portland to fight child trafficking.

He spoke at the event organized by Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, who brought together more than two dozen faith-based organizations from around the country to put a public spotlight on human trafficking.

"This issue is not partisan," Wyden said. "Regardless of your philosophy or political persuasion, we come together to fight human trafficking."

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Events

July 12: Bill Hillar, a retired colonel in the U.S. Army Special Forces whose daughter was forced into the sex trade in Southeast Asia and later died, will discuss the subject at 6 p.m. at Kells Irish Restaurant & Pub, 112 S.W. Second Ave.

July 21: Briefing on the issue before the Portland City Council, 2 p.m. in City Hall council chambers, 1221 S.W. Fourth Ave.

July 27: An episode of "Dan Rather Reports" called "Pornland, Oregon: Child Prostitution in Portland" will be screened at noon in the Multnomah County boardroom, 501 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.

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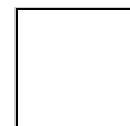
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County officials have cited the city's proximity to Interstates 5 and 84, lax sexual trafficking enforcement laws and a large population of homeless youths as explanations for the state's swelling ranks of human trafficking cases.

Wyden and Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, introduced a bill last month that would crack down on traffickers and fund victim shelters in six states. Last fall, the state gave Multnomah County a \$500,000 grant that created the three-year Multnomah County Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children project, which better coordinates victim response by law enforcement and social service agencies.

The state keeps no data on victims of sexual trafficking. But advocates estimate that thousands of Oregon children are at high risk of sexual and labor trafficking.

Hundreds of thousands of American youths are trafficked for sexual exploitation every year, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

Saturday's rally was the first in a series of events scheduled this month after the Portland City Council and the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners voted to proclaim July as Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

-- **Bobby Allyn**

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Oregonians Against Trafficking Humans, oregonoath.org or 503-251-2479. Or call OATH about hosting training at your school, workplace or place of worship.

Report suspected cases to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, 1-888-373-7888, nhtrc.polarisproject.org

Donate [online](#) to the Beaverton-based Sexual Assault Resource Center. Donations can be earmarked for commercially and sexually exploited youths.

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 **rockeightfire** July 10, 2010 at 6:39PM [Follow](#)

Don't be fooled by Ron Wyden. He's been saying he's going to "fight" for a number of issues (usually easy, non-controversial ones like anti-human trafficking. I mean come on, who isn't

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thewayitottabe July 11, 2010 at 12:21AM

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Well said.

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thewayitottabe July 11, 2010 at 12:23AM

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Speaking as a registered Democrat, I can't think of a single Dem worth having in office.

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conservatype July 11, 2010 at 7:07AM

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thewayitottabe:

"speaking as a registered Democrat, I can't think of a single Dem worth having in office"

Well, dude, perhaps it's time to take a serious look at your party affiliation. The Democrat party used to be the party of liberalism. Now it's the party of socialism. If we continue down this road, soon it will be the party of gulags and death camps. When you take freedoms from the people and give them to the elites, you know the outcome won't be good. If you don't believe it, take a hard look at countries like Cuba and Venezuela. If you don't like what you see, first change your party affiliation. Then join the Tea Party crowd, who are marching in the streets against the federal government power grab.....

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justonian July 11, 2010 at 7:59AM

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And I vow to poke the next religious idiot who comes to my door directly in the eye. Do I get a boring agenda ridden news story about me now?

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purplehayes July 11, 2010 at 8:56AM

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Is this the same Senator Wyden who wouldn't respond to my email about his voting record on E-verify? I asked only one question (politely) and still no response. Si Se Puede!!!

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