



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT

Katie Amodei

425-787-5128

katie@bestalliance.org

**Local Nonprofit Partners with Sound Transit to Develop Best Practices
and Provide Human Trafficking Awareness Training**

SEATTLE, Wash. – In recognition of National Human Trafficking Awareness Month and the growing concern posed by the threat of human trafficking in Washington, the local nonprofit Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking ([BEST](#)) is announcing a partnership with Sound Transit.

BEST is providing consultation and assisting Sound Transit to develop protocols for responding to human trafficking situations. Last year BEST assisted the Sound Transit Law Enforcement Department to develop in-person training for law enforcement, security officers, and fare enforcement officers. Today BEST is expanding human trafficking awareness training for all Sound Transit staff and contractors who interact with passengers or work on construction projects, with online, video-based [BEST Basics](#) training.

“Human trafficking is a deplorable reality of our world that needs greater attention. Every government and organization that can do something to fight it should seize the opportunity. Sound Transit is very pleased to have the chance to work with BEST to help our personnel understand this issue better and stay on the lookout during the course of their work,” said Sound Transit Chief Safety Officer, David Wright.

Victims of human trafficking include vulnerable children, women, and men who are subjected to sexual exploitation or forced labor through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. Human trafficking happens all around us. But if witnesses do not know what to look for, it can easily go unnoticed.

People who are vulnerable to human trafficking frequently use public buses and mass transit systems. They can be trying to leave an abusive family situation or experiencing homelessness, hunger, or isolation. Traffickers look for vulnerabilities, and they know they can often find and recruit new victims at bus stops or transit stations. Sound Transit employees may witness these interactions and are in a unique position to be able to help human trafficking victims.

According to a [2018 report published by Polaris](#), 33 percent of human trafficking survivors surveyed said that they used public buses during their exploitation and 19 percent used rail services. Additionally, 26 percent of survivors reported that public or mass transit played a role in at least one of their attempts to escape their traffickers.

This partnership between Sound Transit and BEST will help employees who work on Sounder Trains, Link Light Rail, and Sound Transit Express buses learn how to spot the warning signs of human trafficking if they encounter a potential human trafficking victim. This will dramatically increase the number of eyes and ears watching for human trafficking throughout the Puget Sound Region.

“Employees working on Sound Transit routes and in transit stations have the opportunity to see and interact with thousands of people in the general public each year. Some of those people can be human trafficking victims, and often all they need in order to receive help is for a kind person to ask them if they are ok,” explains Mar Brettmann, CEO of BEST. “That’s why we are pleased to announce our partnership with Sound Transit. Their focus on implementing best practices and providing human trafficking awareness training for their employees is sure to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable people who need assistance in the Puget Sound region.”

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About Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST)

Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST) is a Seattle-based nonprofit organization with the mission to align and equip leaders to use the power of business to prevent human trafficking. BEST is the first organization in the country dedicated entirely to working with businesses to disrupt human trafficking. BEST has provided consultation and training to thousands of businesses on how to prevent human trafficking. For more information visit www.bestalliance.org.