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Title: Proclaiming February 15, 2018 "Not for Sale Day" to raise awareness about sexual exploitation

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2/21/2018	1	Mayor's Office	Signed	
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Proclaiming February 15, 2018 "Not for Sale Day" to raise awareness about sexual exploitation

WHEREAS, sexual exploitation is defined as the sexual abuse of someone who engages in commercial sexual activity. Commercial sexual activity occurs when anything of value or a promise of anything of value, such as money, drugs, food, shelter, protection, and other basics of life, is provided to a person by any means in exchange for any type of sexual activity. A third person may or may not be involved; and

WHEREAS, sexual trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation is a market built on exploitation, violence, and brutality. Sex buyers use money and power to exploit victims. Traffickers profit by linking buyers to victims for sale. Facilitators of trafficking recruit a supply of victims and prepare them for sale through systematic exploitation of specific needs and vulnerabilities; and

WHEREAS, victims of sexual exploitation come from every background, race, gender, sexual orientation, age and economic status. The average age of entry for a minor who is exploited is 12 to 14 years of age. These youth often go unidentified or misidentified and unreported;

WHEREAS, a comprehensive Minnesota study released in August 2017, found that buyers typically are white middle-aged males who travel 30 to 60 miles for sex, often before or after work, while on their lunch break, on business trips or male-focused vacations like hunting trips. Based on a national study, 26,000 Minnesota men may have bought sex in the past year; and

WHEREAS, the perpetrators of sexual exploitation cause great harm and trauma to their victims, violating their rights, they also traumatize families, and undermine the stability, safety and well-being of our communities; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officials and nonprofits across Minnesota are taking aggressive and new action to crack down on buyers of commercial sex and boosting programs aimed at prevention measures for keeping persons from being exploited and sex-trafficked; and

WHEREAS, survivors of sexual exploitation have bravely confronted this issue by telling their stories and leading multidisciplinary coalitions of advocates to support victims of this crime and to educate communities;

and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Department of Human Services as well as other state and nonprofit agencies along with local municipalities and law enforcement agencies are working together towards providing supportive victim-centered services such as trauma-informed services and safe housing, as well as Regional Navigators who are responsible for connecting victims with services and serving as experts for their communities; and

WHEREAS, “Not for Sale Day” is an opportunity to educate, promote safety for all, accountability and justice, and underscore the commitments made by organizations and communities to end sexual exploitation in our communities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Saint Paul City Council proclaims February 15, 2018 as ‘Not for Sale Day’.