

## **RESPECT MINNESOTA ISSUES STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO BELTRAMI COUNTY HUMAN TRAFFICKING ARRESTS**

Respect is built upon community expectations of safety and wellbeing. We stand with the agencies that executed the human trafficking sting in Beltrami County this past weekend to help keep our communities safe for everyone. Actions that threaten another person's right to freedom, safety, and dignity are simply unacceptable.

"Human trafficking has no place in our industry," said Joe Kramer, special pipeline representative for the [International Union of Operating Engineers](#) and one of the founding members of Respect Minnesota. "We have wonderful men and women who are working hard to provide for their families, yet a couple of individuals cast a bad light on everyone. We stand with those calling for zero tolerance. This type of behavior must stop – everywhere and in every way. No one has the right to exploit another individual. And everyone has the right to be respected and to feel safe in the communities where they live and work.

It all starts with respect. Respect Minnesota is about respect for everyone. We don't take sides. We believe that everyone should be treated equally. That's why we stand up on days like today as a reminder that we still have a lot of work to do, and to provide support and encouragement for those who need it."

Our pledge is a challenge and an opportunity to do better and to be better for ourselves and the world around us. Respect yourself, respect others, respect our communities, and Respect Minnesota.

### **About Respect Minnesota**

Founded in 2019 during the planning and permitting process for the Line 3 Replacement project, Respect Minnesota is a pledge-driven initiative to create a broader community view by bringing people together to ensure that all citizens of Minnesota will be respected, especially around topics that generate strong opposing views. The tenets of the pledge focus on respect, inclusivity, freedom of speech, safety, and personal accountability. Everyone who lives, works, or visits Minnesota is invited to take the pledge. Learn more at [respectmn.org](https://respectmn.org).

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