

ATEST NATIONAL CALL ON TVPRA
02/27/2013 – 1:00 PM ET
Conference ID # CR279919

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Larissa: Welcome to the ATEST National Call on TVPRA and other issues conference call. My name is Larissa and I'll be your operator for today's call. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. Later we'll conduct a question and answer session. Please note that this conference is being recorded and I'd like to turn the call over to Melysa Sperber. Melysa, you may begin.

Ms. Melysa Sperber: Thank you Larissa. Thank you everyone for joining the national call today. We are so excited to speak with you given the recent turn of events in the House of Representatives where we believe that the vote on the Senate passed version of VAWA which includes the TVPA, has a strong chance of passage in the next 48 hours. My name is Melysa Sperber and I'm with the human rights team at Vital Voices, an international women's organization that works with women leaders to accelerate peace and prosperity in their communities. Vital Voices is one of 12 organizations in the alliance to end slavery and trafficking. Attached is a coalition of US based human rights organizations working to end modern day slavery and human trafficking in the United States and around the world. We advocate for lasting solutions to prevent labor and sex trafficking, hold perpetrators accountable and insure justice for victims. Our collective experience implementing programs overseas and at home has provided our coalition with an unparalleled breadth and depth of expertise and we are so thrilled to be able to share our experiences with you today. Each of my colleagues on the coalition will introduce themselves in turn as they speak. To brief us on the current state of play in Congress, I'm turning to my colleague Cory Smith, who is the senior policy advisor to attest.

Mr. Cory Smith: Hey, thank you so much Melysa and thank you to everyone for all your work over the last few weeks and really the last couple of years to get the Trafficking Victim Protection Act reauthorized. If not for you, we would not be in this position to have a possible victory. But we still have a lot of work to do and we'll talk about that today. I'm going to start off just updating and kind of rehashing what happened in the Senate. About three weeks ago, the Senate was considering the Violence Act Women Act, VAWA, as many of you know. They were looking at amendments on the floor for final passage. On Thursday, February 7, Senator Leahy, who is the lead sponsor of the Senate TVPRA, saw an opportunity and took a chance to offer the entire Senate TVPRA with some modifications which we will cover shortly. He took that opportunity to offer it as an amendment to VAWA. The Leahy amendment was accepted as part of the Senate agreement for VAWA. And on Tuesday, February 12, the Leahy amendment passed by a resounding bipartisan vote of 93 to 5, again 93 to 5. A huge number of Republicans supported. That is really a pretty much unprecedented vote these days. You don't see that many members of both parties get together on much of anything. But that vote was huge. The only five to vote no were Senator Coburn, a Republican from Oklahoma and Hoff, a Republican from Oklahoma, Lee, a Republican from Utah, Sessions, a Republican from Alabama and Johnson, a republican from Wisconsin. Just wanted to give a huge thanks to Senator Leahy, Senator Rubio, who really lead efforts in the last year or two and there were other Senate Democrats and Republicans that were part of this; too many to name now. But again, thanks to you all and your work, we are able to get this amendment through and do it by a resound vote of 93 to 5 and put us in position now where we have a real chance to get this through in the House in hopefully the next couple of days. And for that, I'm going to turn it over to David Abramowitz to talk to everyone about the House, David.

Mr. David Abramowitz: Thanks Cory. This is David Abramowitz, Vice President for Policy and Government Relations with Humanity United. The House of Representatives is at this very moment in the midst of the beginning consideration of the Violence against Women Act. And it's probably, as many of you know, over the course of the last year and a half, the House of Republicans have been trying to figure out their position with respect to the Violence against Women Act Reauthorization. There is lots of support within the Republican conference for it but there are a number of challenging issues that they were facing. There was almost an agreement in December with the Senate to push the bill through. That did not happen. Now the bill has come over from the Senate with the TVPRA attached. And the House has decided that they will consider a substitute amendment that the House Republicans have put together that deals with a number of the issues that they've had concerns on. It's a narrower set of provisions than the ones in the Senate bill. It also does not include the trafficking victim's Reauthorization Act. Under the procedure, which is being debated right now on the House floor as we speak, the members tomorrow would be considering the substitute amendment first to see if the Republican's substitute amendment would have enough votes to prevail and replace the Senate text which is going to be pending. And if it succeeds, then they'll have a final vote which would then be on the House substitute text that was adopted. However, if the House substitutes text, which will be considered first is defeated, then they will go to a final vote on the Senate version that passed the Senate, including the TVPRA. So if the substitute amendment fails and then the final bill passes, the Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Act would be part of the final package and would be sent to the president for his signature. So our current thinking is that we want to try to talk to members, anyone people have contact with on the House side, and encourage them to oppose the House substitute and vote for the final passage with the bipartisan Senate bill which includes the Trafficking Victim's Reauthorization Act. And Melysa will talk about that in a second. There are some possibilities that this may not happen in the next 24 hours or that there will be changes. The Republicans could change some things on the floor today. They could decide not to proceed with the final votes tomorrow if there are reservations being expressed by their constituencies. So as we were just talking about and when we were in the conference room where the speakers were talking, some of us are on pins and needles. We don't know what's going to happen. But our best hope is that it will pass by tomorrow night if the House substitute is defeated and the Senate text with the bipartisan Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Act is adopted. Just to talk a little bit about what's in the Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Act as included in the Senate text; I'm going to hand it over first to Stephanie with the Coalition against Slavery and Trafficking, Stephanie.

Ms. Stephanie Richard: Hi, thank you so much David. This is Stephanie Richard. I'm the Policy and Legal Services Director at the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking in Los Angeles, California. And we are just ecstatic after two years of work that the Senate at least has passed the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act. And there are some very key provisions that better protect trafficking victims as well as help prosecution. And also I think importantly that really address the larger prevention looking at labor exploitation. So one of the first important provisions that was passed in the Senate version is that broad and foreign labor contracting, which is a crime that was created under the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act of 2008 and basically includes, it doesn't raise the level of trafficking, but it looks as if people were promised one thing for work and then something else happens to them. And again, it can be a trafficking situation, but it doesn't have to be. It's a little bit of a lower standard. And so this crime was added to a U Visa eligible list of crimes. And we think this is really important because a lot of trafficking crimes are really hard, especially in the labor contracts, are hard to prosecute as labor trafficking. However, the Broad and Former Labor Contracting crime is actually a lot easier to prove and prosecute. So providing this protection for immigration theft to victims who could be victims of labor exploitation or of trafficking, we thought was a very important new measure. Similarly, the crime of fraud and foreign labor contracting was added to RICO provisions and this is what allows you to prosecute larger, kind of more organized rings. And we've seen successful prosecutions under TRAP, Forced Labor and Trafficking under RICO, but it added this additional crime. Now I'm going to turn it over to Polaris, Mary from Polaris Project to discuss other provisions that impact domestic victims.

Ms. Mary Ellison: Hi, this is Mary Ellison and I'm the Director of Policy for Polaris Project. And we operate the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline and are pleased to join this call with our attest members and very excited about what's happening on the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act this week and thank you all for being on this call and for helping us to get as far as we have. And hopefully this week we'll have some really good news. So I am going to talk a bit about one provision of the TVPRA which is a new section that would add a new crime to the crimes that are in 18 USC Chapter 77 or the Trafficking Crimes of the US Criminal Code. And that is the crime of unlawful conduct with respect to immigration documents. So we all know that traffickers often hold immigration documents, hold passports of trafficking victims in an effort to try to control them and try to isolate them even further than they're already isolated. And so this section would create a new crime of unlawful conduct with respect to those documents if a trafficker is in any way knowingly destroying, concealing, removing, confiscating or possessing purported or actual passports or immigration documents and makes a that standalone criminal offense with a penalty of up to a year. And so we think that this is a good addition that will allow prosecutors to have another tool in their toolbox to prosecute traffickers. And with that, I'm going to turn it over to Keeli Sorensen at Safe Horizon.

Ms. Keeli Sorensen: Thank you Mary. I'm Keeli Sorensen, the Director of Training and Advocacy for Safe Horizons Anti-Trafficking Program. And I'm going to speak about Section 1206 of the TVPRA. As a little background, in the 2008 Reauthorization, the TVPA required that the Secretary of State develop an information pamphlet on legal rights and resources for foreign nationals applying for employment or education based non-immigrant visas. Since that time, many service providers have actually seen an increase of foreign nationals making self-referrals using this pamphlet. Overall it has had tremendous success in making exploited workers aware of their rights and aware of the services available to them. We're very excited to see that in Section 1206 of the TVPRA, they are expanding these education efforts by requiring that counselor waiting rooms show videos informing foreign nationals who are applying for employment or education based non-immigrant visas of various rights. They're going to be explaining the right about portability of employment, their legal rights of employment under employment law and immigration law, the illegality of slavery and human trafficking and their legal rights when they get to this country, including the right to seek redress or the right to report abuses without retaliation. And we think with this additional education effort, we're going to see even more referrals and even more folks being able to identify that they are in fact in a situation of exploitation and can call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline for instance to seek assistance and escape from that situation. With that, I'm going to forward it on to Jesse from World Vision, thank you.

Mr. Jesse Eaves: Alright, hello everyone. This is Jesse Eaves. I am the Senior Policy Adviser for Child Protection at World Vision. We're an international relief development and advocacy organization focused on working with children around the world, and here to lead off talking about the international section of the Senate passed TVPRA. And as many of you know, the TVPRA really made the US a global leader in combatting human trafficking around the world and the Senate bill definitely continues that tradition. And one of the key features of the international provisions of the Senate bill is the focus on partnerships. And this is really drawn from former Secretary Clinton's commitment to push partnerships as the "forth P" with prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership. And this means partnerships between governments, civil society, the private sector, universities, foundations and so on in order to insure that no US citizen contributes to either labor or sex trafficking. And one of the main pieces of this focus on partnership are the key provisions from the Child Protection Compact Act which was a bipartisan bill that appeared in the 111th and 112th Congresses. And the premise of this section, which is Section 105A, is quite simple. Many countries around the world have shown the political motivation to end slavery in their country and they have all the right laws and everything looks good on paper. But they still have a high prevalence of trafficking occurring. So as a result, they lack the resources, the training, the legal expertise and the technical capacity to really enforce the laws and reduce that prevalence. So

these revisions will allow the creation of partnerships between the US government and governments who are trying to combat slavery by creating child protection compacts. And these are multi-year agreements that will set out measurable goals that countries have to meet and also allow for the provision of resources and training to meet those goals in the area of strengthening child protection systems and strengthening up judicial systems of those countries. So finally in accordance with the goals of strengthening partnership, the language includes both civil society and the private sector as key players in the success of these compacts. So this is not a silver bullet by any means, but it's a crucial tool that the US can have at its disposal to engage this issue with countries around the world to develop sustainable and long-term solutions to modern day slavery, so that section and I'm now going to turn it over to Annick Febrey from International Justice Mission to continue on looking at the international pieces.

Ms. Annick Febrey: Thanks Jesse. I'm Annick Febrey. I serve on the government relations team with International Justice Mission. In addition to the compacts, the bill also includes a provision that provides state with the capacity to respond in cases of humanitarian crisis or other emergencies. So for example in the case of the Haiti earthquake a couple of years ago, thousands of [INDISCERNIBLE] children were orphaned. And first responders on the ground took efforts to return them to their families which instinctively is what any one of us would have done. But in this case, it meant returning them to slavery. This provision will help make sure that staff with the relevant expertise such as child protection are able to be deployed quickly in these situations. I also wanted to briefly highlight a couple of changes to the international section of S1301. The first is at Section 102 which designated regional anti-trafficking officers at US embassies abroad was taken out. There was a question about how these officers would interact with the J Tip office on drafting the annual Tip Report. And secondly, Section 106 of S1301 was modified by taking out language that would have modified the Tier 2 watch list. And with that, I'll hand it back over to Melysa to cover action items.

Ms. Melysa Sperber: Thanks Annick. As David and Cory had mentioned earlier, over the next few days the House will be considering S47, which is the Senate passed version of the Violence against Women Act. And this version includes the Trafficking Victims Protection Act which was adopted as was mentioned earlier by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 93 to 5. The House will first consider a substitute amended to S47 and that is a narrower approach that does not include the TVPA. So what we are really hoping that people can focus attention and energy on in the next day to day and a half, is to call your members of Congress who need to hear from you as soon as possible to send the message that they should vote no on the substitute amendment to S47 and vote yes on final passage of S47. This is communicated in an action alert that a test has put together that is on our website. It has been communicated through our email and we encourage you to share it with your networks and on social media and to encourage as many supporters of this movement as possible to communicate to Congress how important it is to pass the reauthorization and to get it on Obama's steps for his signature. We do have specific targets and further details of who are most important to contact in Congress. And if you're interested in that, I would urge you to contact Meredith Owen who's with Humanity United and her email is mowen@humanityunited.org. If the House does not proceed to pass the Senate-passed version of the Violence Against Women Act which includes the TVPA, Attest anticipates being in touch with you to provide further information about what actions may be necessary moving forward. And now to brief us on our other legislative priorities, I am turning over to my colleague Marina Colby from ECPAT USA.

Ms. Marina Colby: Thanks Melysa and thank you everyone for joining today's call. As Melysa stated, my name is Marina Colby. I am Director of Public Policy and Government Relations at ECPAT, which stands for Ending Child Prostitution and Trafficking. We are a child rights organization based here in the US with a mission focused on ending child trafficking. As advocates, we know that too many children today are at risk for human trafficking for both sexual and labor exploitation. And we also know that children who are runaway or homeless are especially vulnerable to this type of trafficking as well as youth in the child welfare and foster care systems. So to that end, Attest has been working to advance

House Bill 2730 on strengthening the child welfare response to human trafficking. So this bill was introduced last session as a bipartisan measure by Representative Karen Bass of California and Representative Tom Marino of Pennsylvania. And both of these representatives serve as co-chairs of the Congressional caucus on foster youth. And by the end of last session, we had an impressive and growing list of bipartisan co-sponsors for this bill that we would like to continue this session. So we're working very closely with Representative Bass and office on reintroduction of this legislation as well as with several senate offices who have expressed interest in introducing companion legislation in the Senate for the first time. The news offices include Senator Wyden of Oregon, Senator Cornyn of Texas, Senator Blumenthal, Connecticut and Senator Portman of Ohio. This work is still in progress and it is looking very positive and we're definitely seeking your support if any of you are interested. So in a really quick five point summary of the legislation that was introduced last session that we are seeking to reintroduce this session; it seeks to strengthen the child welfare response to human trafficking by providing child welfare employees with an appropriate guidance on how to identify documents and educate children at risk of exploitation. It also seeks to extend specialized care and services to the age of 21 for foster care youth that have been trafficked. It also works to insure child welfare agencies place victims of trafficking in homes with a capacity to meet their unique needs, including mental health needs. It adds a human trafficking classification to the child welfare reporting system in order to help insure that appropriate services are provided to victims of trafficking as well as to monitor trends. And perhaps most importantly, it seeks to require child welfare agencies to report as part of their already mandated annual plans to HHS, what their current or future procedures and policies are to address child trafficking. And what we really like about this though in these tough economic times is that the Congressional budget office has indicated that there are no direct costs associated with this legislation. And it's also a really good example of how to utilize existing frameworks and systems to better identify and provide the needed services to traffic children. If you have any further questions after this call or would like to lend your support to this ongoing advocacy, please feel free to contact me or my colleague Stephanie Richard of CAST, who you heard earlier in the call. And also Jennie Wood is the excellent Congressional staffer who we are working with in Representative Bass' office. So now I'd like to pass the microphone over to my colleague Karen Stauss of Free the Slaves. She's got another piece of legislation that we're very interested in.

Ms. Karen Stauss: Hi everyone. This is Karen. As Marina said, I'm the Director of Programs with Free the Slaves. Thank you so much for joining us and thank you so much for all the action that everyone's been taking for the last more than two years, I think, to get the TVPA through. Our fingers are crossed and we're taking action and not least because we're hoping that if the TVPA passes, then Congress will also be able to turn its attention to some of these other new proposals for ways to strengthen the US government's approach against trafficking. So including the child welfare legislation that Marina just described and then there are a couple of pieces of legislation that relate to the role of business. As you know, the TVPA is largely focused on the role of governments including the US government in addressing trafficking, but the fact is that we're not going to make final progress on the issue of human trafficking around the world until businesses are all engaged in the effort. And so one of the key legislative goals is that we will have after the TVPRA is to pass business transparency legislation requiring companies to let us know what it is that they're doing to address the way that their businesses touch human trafficking and modern slavery. So the Business Transparency on Slavery and Trafficking Act is just that. It requires companies to disclose. So I think that there is some out there who would definitely like to see companies just strictly prohibited from having any link to slavery and having accountability systems in place. And then there are others of course who would like no regulation for businesses whatsoever. So we think that the transparency approach is a reasonable, feasible, pragmatic approach that has chances of passing through this Congress that would require some progress on the issue. And the way the legislation is set up, it basically requires companies to disclose information about what steps, if any, they're taking to address the risks of slavery within their business operations. So that includes both product supply chains as well as labor recruitment efforts. It asks companies whether they

have policies on those issues, whether they're actually providing training to their staff to implement their policies, whether they're engaged in auditing, also what type of management processes that they have in place to actually prevent trafficking all through their business. And the proposed legislation as drafted, really builds off of the California law, probably a lot of you are familiar with the California Transparency and Supply Chains Act which was enacted in 2010. This legislation builds off of that so it's not conflicting at all. It's just adding on to it at the federal level. And another sort of change between the state legislation and the federal legislation of course is that this would be a disclosure to the US Securities and Exchange Commission; so that in addition to posting information on their websites, companies would actually be required to disclose this information as part of their annual disclosures to the SEC. So the status of the legislation right now it has not been introduced in this session yet. This legislation was introduced in the last session of Congress by Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York, along with Chris Smith of New Jersey. And it got a certain amount of attention in the House and the Senate. There were briefings on both sides, but it did not get introduced into the Senate in the last session. So our goal this year is to have it reintroduced in the House and we understand from Representative Maloney's office that they are interested in doing that sometime in the early springtime which is great news. We also would like to see it introduced in the Senate for the first time. So we know we'll be reaching back out. I know that a lot of you have been supporting this legislation. In the past we've had sign on letters. In the last session we'll be reaching back out for your support. For those who are interested in taking action within their states, feel free to be in touch with us to coordinate if you're interested in having district office meetings. And even if you're interested in introducing similar legislation at the state level either this year or gearing up for that for next year, I think that would be something really interesting to be in contact about as well because that type of effort can actually help push the federal legislation forward also. So feel free to be in touch with any of us. I think you have Meredith Owen's email and a lot of you hopefully have my email as well. And thanks again. Everyone cross your fingers and take action please and we look forward to hopefully having a very exciting call again in a few months. So with that, I will hand it over to my colleague Neha Misra at Solidarity Center.

Ms. Neha Misra: Thanks Karen. So as Karen said, this is Neha Misra. I'm the Senior Specialist for Migration and Human Trafficking at the Solidarity Center. The Solidarity Center is an international NGO that focuses on promoting worker rights around the world. And while we were very excited about the passage of the TVPA as part of VAWA in the Senate and are hopeful for that action in the House this week, Attest was disappointed that provisions to regulate foreign labor recruiters is not included in the TVPRA this time around. We had a little bit of success in that it was in the House version last year but got stripped out in Committee and it's not in the Senate version. But we continue to see that the regulation of foreign labor recruiters is an essential element in preventing human trafficking and forced labor in the United States, as labor recruiters are often complicit or directly involved in the trafficking of workers, especially exploiting workers in the US non-immigrant visa programs. And so despite the fact that we weren't able to get it into TVPRA, it remains a priority for us and hopefully for all of you on the call today too. And we're hoping to take advantage of the current momentum on comprehensive immigration reform that is going on right now in Congress to have another stab at getting regulation to foreign labor recruiters as a trafficking prevention tool past Congress as part of the immigration reform package. And so Attest has taken some of the immigration provision including the foreign labor recruiter ones that were part of our package of proposals back for the 2011 TVPRA that have not made it into the bill and repackaged them as proposals for comprehensive immigration reform. And there's a number of topics that my colleague Stephanie from CAST is going to help me talk about. But just we wanted to point out that one of them is on foreign labor recruiters. And we've been working in coalitions with a lot of worker and immigrant rights groups including the International Labor Recruiters Working Group, which I know many of you on this call are also members of, just released a report last week and we're hoping to use that in some of our advocacy to insure that the foreign labor recruiter issue does not get dropped. We see it as definitely a provision that can fall under the future flow pillar that's currently being discussed by the gang of eight on the hill because there is a lot of discussion right now as part of

immigration reform on expanding and reforming the guest worker temporary visa programs in the United States. And we think that regulation of foreign labor recruiters is a key piece of that. And so if anyone is interested in working with us on trying to get this part of immigration reform, please reach out to Meredith and she'll get in touch with me and we'll loop you in on our strategies. So now I'm going to turn it back over to Stephanie Richard from CAST to talk about a California bill on foreign labor recruiters and also the other immigration trafficking related provisions.

Ms. Stephanie Richard: Thanks Neha. Again, this is Stephanie from CAST. And so first I just want to highlight that in the Senate TVPRA, there isn't anything that are the full extent of the regulations we wanted around foreign labor recruiters. But there is a section that requires a study by GAO on the particular problem. We think that falls far short of what really needs to be done and that we have far too much information, that this is one of the key ways we can prevent modern day slavery in the United States. But that is what we are able to get in the Senate version of the past TVPRA and we're at least happy to have this as an issue that's acknowledged. And then because we have, you know, we've been pushing so hard at the federal level to keep foreign labor recruiters better regulated, I also thought it could be a good strategy to do this at the state level. And I'm encouraging those from other states and California to maybe think about doing the same things. So this year Senator Steinberg introduced SB1516 in California which looks at specifically regulating the foreign labor recruiters. And so it has the three prongs in the draft of the current legislation that Attest has really supported, which is disclosure for workers, registration for foreign labor recruiters and liability and private right of action for companies who don't use this system. And so I think this is going to be a heavy battle. And the legislation as drafted is a work in progress because we want to reach out to many groups that have worked in this area and California for a long time, including labor unions. So I encourage if anyone is interested in this particular piece of legislation or like technical consult in doing the same thing in their own state, to contact me off line. And then kind of the follow-up, we do think that when you're looking at comprehensive immigration reform, that we as service providers and those working in the anti-trafficking movement can play a role in this. So unfortunately with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, some of the most controversial provisions were anything related to immigration. And so, you know, we've got a very few minor fixed in TVPRA for immigration issues for trafficking survivors. However, Attest has released a comprehensive packet on recommendations for comprehensive immigration reform to better protect and prevent human trafficking. And that incorporates many of the immigration provisions that we tried to push in TVPRA. And we felt like perhaps in the comprehensive immigration reform debate, this could be a less heavy lift as my inner reforms that would really greatly assist on trafficking victims or those who are slipping through the cracks right now who are eligible for these, could be part of this reform package. And again, we are also going to be pushing the foreign labor recruiter provisions as part of confidence in immigration reform as we think that goes hand in hand with that. And so now I will turn it over to another Attest member to speak on the next topics.

Mr. David Abramowitz: Hi, this is David Abramowitz, sorry about that. I just got a call from the House of Representatives on a particular matter. With respect to the presidential initiatives in the executive branch, I just wanted to of course, note that legislation and important legislative initiatives that Stephanie and others just talked about can be complimented. In this context it's very important that there be additional efforts to work with the agencies of the executive branch using new authorities that they receive if the Traffic and Victims Protection Reauthorization Act passes over the next couple of days, as well as their existing commitments that the president and other agencies have made. And in that context, last year the Alliance Against Laboring and Trafficking worked on a report called the Path to Freedom, A Presidential Agenda for Abolishing Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking which we issued in December to try to provide an overall global perspective on what the executive branch should be doing and what the president should be following up on over the course of the next four years which of course there will be new things that will come up. But it was an effort, as particularly with the transitions that were occurring and are occurring in Washington DC with a new staff at the White House, as staff changes

in a second administration and of course with a new Secretary of State that there be a firm list. I'm not going to go over everything that's in there. There's a long list of different issues, some of which have been discussed over the course of the last couple of years on these calls. There are four major recommendations. One is that the president should commit to drafting a US national action plan on human trafficking and human slavery, that's often a way to really harness energy even further than what the president did in September when he launched a number of initiatives. The president should make reauthorization of the TVPA, a key objective of course that we're working on as we speak as we've discussed. Third, the president should admit an FY2014 budget request which Stephanie just mentioned in terms of our appropriation works. That's the start of the appropriation season and that he should try to increase the requests that he makes in this kind of budget environment. Really the president's requests for items are a key benchmark by which the Congress reviews the levels that anti-trafficking; of course all federal programs should be, made at so we're pushing for there to be a real commitment by the president to follow up on his presidential speech to show that there are additional resources even in this difficult budget climate. And finally that based on the child compact work that's already being done in the TVPRA and efforts to try to promote a compact, that the United States should embrace an innovative, focused and comprehensive approach to combatting human trafficking, forced labor and other forms of modern day slavery around the world. This report in its entirety can be found on the Attest website and slaveryandtrafficking.org. And our colleague Meredith Owen who was mentioned earlier, will follow up to you with a link directly to that website so you can the report in its entirety. And as we're concluding the presentation part of this call before we move to questions, I just wanted to echo what everybody has said on this call in how tremendously important all the contributions have been from all of you who are on the phone. Really I do not think that without the efforts, particularly on the Senate over the last two years, we would be where we are with the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act. And with that, I'm going to turn it over to our operator Larissa to help us field questions.

Larissa: Thank you. I'll now begin the question and answer session. If you have a question, please press zero then one on your touchtone phone. If you wish to be removed from the queue, please press zero then two. If you're using a speakerphone, you may now pick up the handset before pressing the numbers. Once again, if there are any questions, please press zero then one on your touchtone phone to ask your question.

Ms. Stephanie Richard: And while we're waiting for questions, this is Stephanie from CAST, I feel bad. I forgot to talk about our appropriations work which is probably our highest priority given the state of the budget and the political climate we're in and that we all know that trafficking survivors, law enforcement, all of us working in this area need more resources. So all I wanted to do was highlight that Attest has published a very comprehensive guide on appropriations and human trafficking that's available on our website. And we are calling it the bird book because it has a giant bird on the cover of it. And I encourage you all to look through it to see our request and then to just let people know that we will be having a call on March 18 at 11 o'clock Pacific Standard Time, 2 o'clock Eastern Time to really discuss our priorities and the appropriations process for this year. And as always, ask you guys to support these requests. In the past we've had over a hundred organizations sign on to these requests and in this climate, it's even more important. And then there was one new appropriation in the Senate past TVPRA that Mary was going to speak about very briefly. So Mary did you want to do that quickly before questions?

Ms. Mary Ellison: Sure, sure. Thanks Stephanie. So this is Mary Ellison again from Polaris Project. And one of the provisions that was in the past version of S47 that Senate TVPRA relates to creating a grant program to the states to assist states who are beginning to do some work around protecting children from sex trafficking. And so it would create a grant program. Basically this idea was based on a standalone bill that Senator Cornyn and Senator Wiyen had introduced in the previous year called the Domestic Minors Sex Trafficking Bill. So the piece that got into the TVPRA was a smaller version of that. However it would provide grants to four states to really provide services to sex trafficked children.

And so it's a new grant program that would make funds available and so that's something that certainly people can follow up on and learn more about by looking at the text of the bill. Thanks.

Larissa: The first question comes from Tiffany Williams with National Domestic Worker.

Ms. Tiffany Williams: Hi everyone. This is Tiffany from the National Domestic Worker's Alliance. And we just started our official anti-trafficking project at the Alliance. And one of the questions that our members had was about the new visas. In particular, I remember last year that Senator Leahy had proposed increasing the cap. And I was wondering what the next step is on that and how Attest might be pushing that forward, thanks.

Ms. Stephanie Richard: Hi Tiffany, this is Stephanie from CAST. So I think one thing that you should definitely, you know, remind your workers of is that in the past TVPRA, in the Senate version and hopefully if we get the House, there is the new crime of fraud and foreign labor contracts and I think many exploited domestic workers will qualify for that visa more easily than the key visa. Now that again raises the problem of the cap on the new visas which is at 10,000 for those of you who don't know and it has been exceeded for the last three years, so it is an issue. In VAWA, there was a huge push to have that cap increase and I believe that it was unsuccessful and so that was not a priority in any of our TVPRA advocacies but we'll definitely take a note as we want to listen to those on the ground and what's important to them for our follow-up advocacy, so thank you for that comment.

Larissa: The next question comes from Jeff Barrows from Evolution International.

Mr. Jeff Barrows: Yes, this is Jeff Barrows with Evolution International and the Evolutionary International Shelter Association. We're a developing group of shelters and rehabilitation facilities around the US for victims of sex trafficking. And my question was partially answered with the discussion of the grant program. But I really wanted to know what the thinking was in the writing of the bill that the grant program is limited to only four awards and it appears that they are going to be fairly large awards rather than writing it so that it might be several other federal awards of smaller amounts which would help small organizations that are involved with Evolution International.

Ms. Mary Ellison: Sure, thanks for your question. This is Mary Ellison again from Polaris Project. And originally the bill was drafted so it was, I believe, six grants instead of four. It got pared back as you know. I think the thinking was that they're approaching this really as a pilot program to see if this approach would work. The other thing that they're doing is I think that they're feeling what, I certainly understand your point, at the same time I think the bill drafters were thinking that so much funding is needed to provide the care that these children would need that they didn't want to shortchange them by giving them just small amounts of money because most of these programs that will be starting up in various states around the country would need quite a bit of government funding to jumpstart the effort because not much state funding is available at this point. I do know that one state has recently put together a package of proposals for a state legislature and they are actually estimating that it's going to cost about 13 million to serve sex traffic kids and that's just in one state. So I think that was the thinking originally, you know, because it is a pilot program. And technically the authorization for it would expire when this version of the TVPRA expires, there would be the opportunity to come back again and look at it and so that's certainly something that could change down the road. But initially, as I said, it was meant to be a pilot program to see if this approach would work.

Mr. Jeff Barrows: Okay. Mary Ellison, do you know why the inclusion of the state under five million is in the wording of the grants?

Ms. Mary Ellison: Yes, yes, that is so that some states with smaller populations would have the opportunity. They didn't want to, you know, give. They wanted to make sure that there was somewhat of a level playing field I guess you could say so that, you know, larger states and smaller states would have the opportunity and that smaller states wouldn't be left out.

Mr. Jeff Barrows: Okay, thank you.

Larissa: The next question comes from [INDISCERNIBLE 0:47:00.7] from Southern Poverty Law Center.

Female 1: Hi, thanks. Thank you to everybody on this call for your great work. It's just, it's really impressive. And I guess I have a comment and a question. One is with regard to the regulation of foreign labor recruiters which is so important for my clients, I was unclear as to about the extent to which liability would extend to US-based defendants, such as employers who hire foreign labor contractors. And I guess I just raise that because so many of the foreign labor contractors who my clients come through, never come to the United States. So it would be really difficult to establish jurisdiction over them and I'm sure you guys thought about that but I just was a little, it's not really a question there. It's just I was a little unclear and so would welcome any classification either on this call or some other context. And then my other question was in regard to Mary, the new section of the TVPRA about the new crime for unlawful contact with regard to immigration documents; how does that interact with HNU1592, the authority there and if you could just say anything more about that, that would be great. Thanks so much.

Ms. Mary Ellison: Sure, so this is Mary again at Polaris Project and the question was about the document servitude crime. And so if you look at that closely, basically it is specifically related to foreign labor recruiters that are using documents basically to, you know, put pressure or isolate their victims so it's tied specifically to Section 1351 which is the fraud and foreign labor contracting crime that got added in the 2008 version of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. So basically it applies to those foreign labor recruiters who are using passports and immigration documents against the victim to further control them. So it's a little more specific I think than the crime that's in 1592.

Ms. Stephanie Richard: Neha, do you want to take the question or do you want me to.

Ms. Neha Misra: Go ahead Stephanie, I'll jump in if, yeah, go ahead.

Ms. Stephanie Richard: Okay. So basically, we're glad you asked that clarification and we're sorry we weren't clear. I would say that it's a priority for Attest to do exactly what you're talking about. The idea is that you're never going to be able to bring cases or justice for workers against the foreign labor recruiters because they're often based in the foreign countries. And so yes, the language that we're proposing clearly makes the employers in the United States who are benefiting from the work of the temporary workers who are entering the country liable and the same is true of the California state legislation.

Ms. Neha Misra: Although Stephanie can I add we did put that safe harbor thing in there if you used a licensed recruiter and there was certain exceptions. And we did that because we were told basically that there was no way it would get past Congress two years ago when we first wrote it. But I know we've been talking with Southern Poverty Law Center and a number of other organizations and are trying to find ways to take that safe harbor provision out and figure out a more strict liability standard that we can put in there and still get passed by Congress. So we'll definitely continue that conversation with Southern Poverty and other organizations offline to insure that those provisions are solid in there while still insuring that there's a chance that it'll get passed. But I agree with Stephanie that it's definitely a priority for us and we can understand the issue.

Ms. Mary Ellison: The California law has a strict liability provision. We're not certain we can get that through, but that's how we introduce it, so.

Larissa: Once again, if you have a question please press zero then one on your touchtone phone. Everybody hear me? Chung Lee Kim from Asia Pacific Lenders is online.

Chung: Okay, hi, yes I guess my question is more policy related. So it's my understanding that, you know, one of the reasons that some of the more conservative House Republicans are objecting to Senate version of VAWA has quite a bit to do with protection of American Indian women and giving more authority to try of course to persecute any Indian perpetrators of rape. And I have three in the past several months, I've been a couple of calls with some of the women leaders who are working on this issue because sex trafficking is one of the most common form of human trafficking that are currently taking place on various Indian reservations. So I guess my question is has there been any kind of conversation taking place with American women on this specific issue? And I guess strategically speaking, you know, how much advocacy work do we want to do on behalf of American Indian women who are also victims of sex trafficking? Thank you.

Mr. David Abramowitz: Hi, this is David Abramowitz from Humanity United. Thanks very much for that. Obviously we've been hearing more and more reports regarding human trafficking cases that are rising in travel areas. And it is an area that we want to look at in the future to see what kind of reforms there might be that would be applicable to the unique legal status with respect to the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act that includes these provisions. We, as a test, have not been working specifically on the issues relating to the controversy or around giving authority to travel courts to have jurisdiction over non-native Americans who perpetrate crimes within the jurisdiction that those courts have. There was an effort last December between the House Republican leadership and the Senate judiciary committee to try to come up with a compromise that would address some of these issues and they were very close in coming to an agreement on that. I think how that moves forward will really depend on what happens in the next couple of days. I do believe that the VAWA groups are separately doing a large amount of advocacy and this is one of the key issues that they raise. Thanks.

Mr. Cory Smith: This is Cory Smith. The only thing I would also add is that there's been a number of senators that have been concerned about trafficking on Native American women. Senator Murkowski from Alaska, some of the senators from the upper mid-west.

Mr. David Abramowitz: I think Cory cut out there. I'm sure he'll be rejoining but you might want to move on to the next question, thanks.

Larissa: [FEMALE] [INDISCERNIBLE] from There is Hope for My Survivors online.

[FEMALE]: Hi, thank you. My program is called There is Hope for Me from Survivors to Survivors of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. I wanted to just voice my opinion in regards to the larger grants being given as a large grant. Just to let you know, there is no way that that funding will be reached by a smaller organization such as mine or what the other gentlemen mentioned because there is so much bullying in anti-trafficking. I can tell you firsthand that those of us who are on the ground doing the actual work are not receiving the funding. The kids have so many needs and the local groups that are politically motivated are receiving the funding. They're pulling together to get the grants and the money's not getting to the kids. So I would really like to see something done about that here in South Florida. We're not receiving the funding. We're being excluded from it because of those different motivations. And I'm sad to say that and to see that as a survivor. We rely on private donations to get the work done that goes to the kids. The other thing that I would like to say is when I Googled my name recently, the last

conference call was on, the transcripts were on the web. So you may want to look into that so that these transcripts are not public. Thank you.

Ms. Mary Ellison: Thank you so much for those comments. This is Mary Ellison again at Polaris Project. And thank you for expressing those concerns. What I would say, you know, that I would really highly recommend is that this particular program that's been established to assist trafficked children, is going to be administered by the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families within the Department of Health and Human Services. And so the office, what I would do is really to start a dialogue. Because once the law is passed, then obviously it's up to the agency to make, to do the implementation of the law. What we found as a test is that the more interaction that we can have with the agencies that are implementing the laws to share concerns, to share questions and to exchange information, the better that process usually goes. So I would definitely encourage you to contact the Department of Health and Human Services that children and families and the person that's in charge, his name is George Sheldon. And is very invested, I think, in this issue. And so I would really encourage you to be in touch because they do listen to folks and can provide more information on how they plan to implement the law.

[FEMALE]: Thank you. I will definitely do that. Actually George Sheldon was my dean of students at St. Thomas Law School where I graduated from and he brought me to the state of Florida to be part of the ad hoc committee to create the Safe Harbor Act. So I will definitely contact him. I don't have his email though. If somebody could forward that or if I contact Meredith, would she forward that to me?

Ms. Stephanie Richard: I don't see that to be a problem, just contact Meredith. This is Stephanie. I'd also like to say like it's good for us at Attest to hear concerns like yours. One of our priority areas is to look at really raising survivor voices and getting their input on policy agenda because we recognize that a lot of times those who are on the ground are left out of the dialogue simply because the resources to BMDC are huge. And so we definitely are taking your feedback and it will become part of our dialogue too when we discuss with the coalition. So we really appreciate comments like yours. And I hope if you have other concerns, these are things you can let Attest as a coalition know because we are trying to represent a broad spectrum of trafficking groups across the country. And the more feedback we get from groups like yours, the better.

[FEMALE]: Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

Mr. David Abramowitz: This is David Abramowitz with Humanity and I just did want to note that at the top of the call we did say that this call is going to be transcribed. I mean our hope is that there are so many people who want to join these kinds of calls and then, but they're unable to make it because of the press of their other business and trying to help victims and survivors as you are. So we have been posting these calls on the Attest website. And please, just contact Meredith Owen if there are any concerns about that. We can try to see what we could do about that. Thanks and I think Larissa, we're at the top of the hour.

Larissa: Thank you. And we have no further questions.

Ms. Melysa Sperber: Larissa, this is Melysa. I was just going to close the call and note some follow-up items. First, I just wanted to remind everyone that the action alert that I mentioned earlier is on Attest website and we encourage you to visit it. If you have any need for further information on specific targets, please contact Meredith Owen at mowen@humanityunited.org. We do anticipate, as I mentioned earlier, that if the TVPA does not pass, that we will be in touch about the path ahead. And further, please look for information on our call for March 18 on our national appropriation strategy that will be coming soon. I want to echo what everyone has said that we thank you so much. And we really encourage you to go forward and activate your networks. We believe we're poised to take advantage of a really extraordinary

moment in the next day or so and we need your help to make sure that this promise becomes a reality. And so with that, thank you and please stay in touch.

Larissa: Thank you ladies and gentlemen. This concludes this conference. Thank you for participating. You may now disconnect.