

ATEST National Call on the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA)
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NOTE: Written transcript of the audio recording is provided by Arkadin.

Operator: Hello, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the ATEST National Call on Trafficking Victims Protection Act. As a reminder, all lines will be on listen-only mode however we will have Q&A at the end of the conference. If you need assistance during the call, please press star-zero to speak to an operator. At this time, I would like to introduce and turn the call over to Cory Smith. Go ahead, Cory.

Mr. Cory Smith: Thank you so much, operator, and thank you to everyone for taking the time to be on today's call by the Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking. This is the National Call on the Trafficking Victim Protection Act and the Reauthorization. I think last we had a national call was at the end of last summer so it's been a while since we've talked but wanted to have a call just to update everyone on where things stand and to also talk about different parts of the bill and the Senate bill, and to also leave plenty of time at the end of the call for questions and answers. So you will be in a listen-only mode, as mentioned at the beginning of the call, but we will have plenty of time for questions and answers. After the speakers finish, we will open the call up for questions and answers. The operator will come back on and tell you how to ask questions using your phone, and to get in the queue. I also wanted to remind folks that the call is being recorded. The call is being recorded and we will send an email with a link or a file of an mp3 file of the call in the next couple weeks after the call, so if for some reason you missed the call or a caller misses the call and you'd like to hear what the speakers had to say and the Q&A, there will be an audio of the recording available. So having said that, I wanted to just briefly say the Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking is a diverse coalition of 12 organizations that work on a policy agenda. The last three years we've been working a lot on authorizing legislation, which includes the Trafficking Victim Protection Act. There are other stand-alone bills on trafficking that we have worked on and our focusing on this year that we'll mention a little bit towards the end of the call. We have also worked on federal spending or appropriations, and also oversight and implementation of existing law. As I said, ATEST is 12 organizations and we cover all aspects of human trafficking – labor and sex, adults, minors, U.S. citizens, foreign nationals – again, all aspects of trafficking, both domestically and internationally. We are on this call today to discuss the Trafficking Victim Protection Act. The current efforts of ATEST have focused around the Senate version of the TVPA, which is also known as 1301. That bill is a bipartisan bill. It has a significant number of Republicans joining Democrats to reauthorize the Trafficking Victim Protection Act and it continues the tradition that we've had over the years of a bipartisan or nonpartisan bill. We are currently at 45 cosponsors and we as ATEST are not working on the House Trafficking Bill, which is 3589. We aren't working on that bill because one, it's partisan. There's only Republicans on the current reauthorization of the version of the bill in the House. It has 16 cosponsors and there's also concerns about the stripping of HHS authorization language of funding for HHS, the Health and Human Services agency, in that bill. So today's call is really going to focus around the efforts that ATEST is doing, and all of you are doing, around the Senate version of the bill, 1301, and to kind of talk about some of the different highlights of the Senate bill, some of the different language and provisions that are important to be authorized. I will say the other thing just to keep in mind and I think you'll hear more talk about in the future if efforts to move both those forward and reconcile differences and overcome the impasse that has occurred with the TVPA this year, is that you'll see more talk [INDISCERNIBLE] what's characterized as a straight reauthorization, and what that means is simply usually a one sentence where you extend the previous authorization a year-- years, and that is something I think as time goes by and this year comes to a close, if there isn't progress or a way to overcome the impasse, more attention will be directed to the idea of extending the previous authorization that lapsed in September 30th of last year, you know, a

couple of years, because there's an interest and concern around the funding and the continuity of funding for trafficking priorities. So having said that, I think that there is still a lot of focus by groups on the Senate bill, a lot of interest in getting Senators to cosponsor and support the bill. There's been a lot of efforts recently around some of the Senators like Senator Murkowski from Alaska, Collins and Snowe, both Republican Senators from Maine, Hutchison from Texas, Senator Kirk from Illinois – those members, if you have any connections or contacts, if you have [INDISCERNIBLE] state, it would be extremely helpful to reach out to them and urge them to cosponsor the TVPRA. We are also working on a number of Democrats that aren't on the bill also, but I think that group of Republicans – or any other Republicans – in the Senate that you have relationships with as [INDISCERNIBLE] that would be extremely helpful to urge them to get on the 1301 and to continue our nation's response and priority of fighting trafficking, which this bill [INDISCERNIBLE] and the architecture of the government's response. So having said that, I wanted to turn it over now to some of my colleagues to talk about different aspects of the bill, and then again after we finish this part, there will be plenty of time for Q&A. The operator will prompt and tell you how to get in the queue for questions, and we will be happy to -- that we can to answer any of your questions. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Jesse Eaves with World Vision to talk about a certain provision or section of S.1301. Jesse?

Mr. Jesse Eaves: Thanks a lot, Corey, and thank you, everyone, for joining today. My name is Jesse Eaves. I'm the Senior Policy Advisor for World Vision, and one of the key provisions that we were very excited about in the Senate bill is taken from a stand-alone bill called the Child Protection Compact Act. This was a bill that was introduced in the last Congress and again in this one by Senators Boxer, Berg, Cardin, and Scott Brown from Massachusetts, all of which are now cosponsors of 1301. And this language is essentially meant to provide an additional tool for the U.S. Government to partner with countries that are really making really positive strides in combating trafficking, specifically child trafficking. These are countries that have really shown the political motivation, are responding to their ranking in the TIP Report, and are really working to implement the correct laws, but then they're having certain trouble with implementation. So this legislation is basically a tool that allows the U.S. to form a partnership with a focused country over a five-year period where they would set measurable goals in areas, specifically in protection and prosecution. These are where governments most often show the most weaknesses. So this is not a silver bullet. It's not a cure-all. You'll notice that we didn't really mention prevention in there. Prevention can be incorporated into the prosecution side but what we've seen in particular is that the neediest countries – and we've done research on specifically the Philippines, Lesotho, and Dominican Republic over the past couple years – you know, they have all of the laws in place but they need some targeted assistance, essentially, to fill the gaps that they most often have with protecting survivors and effectively prosecuting traffickers. So the end goal is to get these countries to a place where they do not need U.S. assistance, where they really don't need U.S. pressure, where they can continue to fight on their own, particularly in partnership with local civil society. So we've been excited to see there's been a lot of support for this part of the bill. It really comes on board with what Secretary Clinton has talked about in terms of partnership as being a central pillar of the U.S. fight against slavery, and yeah, so that the short on that section, and I will hand it over now to Melysa Sperber from Vital Voices.

Ms. Melysa Sperber: Hi, and I'm going to hand this over actually to IJM, to Annick, to talk about Rapid Response.

Ms. Annick Febrey: Thanks, Melysa, and thanks, Jesse. Also, in section 105A which is strengthening partnerships, and that's where the Child Protection Compact part was in the bill, it authorizes the Trafficking and Persons Office to establish an emergency fund in order to assist foreign governments during humanitarian crisis situations, and to give an example, following the Haiti earthquake in January 2010, the TIP office had to scramble to find resources and people in order to head down there in order to address trafficking issues on the ground. This resulted in a delay in their response and by the time they

arrived in Haiti, they found that thousands of the [INDISCERNIBLE] children were orphaned and had been returned to their families because it's sort of a natural reaction when you see an orphaned child to return them to their home, except in this case they were actually returning them to their employers and putting them back into slavery; and children who genuinely were orphaned actually became slaves as a result of this. So this section would just give the TIP office the capacity in order to respond more quickly in these types of crisis situations. And with that, I'll turn it over to Neha Misra of the Solidarity Center.

Ms. Neha Misra: Hi, everyone. This is Neha from the Solidarity Center, and I'm going to talk about the foreign labor recruiter provisions in the Senate version of the bill. As many of you on this call know, ATEST proposed a really comprehensive package of provisions dealing with great regulation for foreign labor recruiters including disclosure provisions, no fees, administrative and criminal remedies, etc. Unfortunately it did not make it into the Senate version of the House bill and what they decided was that they needed more information, and that what they would prefer to see was a GAO study on issues related to foreign labor recruiters and workers who are recruited by them to come to the United States through various visa systems. So the Senate version of the bill has a number of items that it lists about different types of things that it would to see in the study, and basically those things include the role of labor recruiters in both countries of origin and countries of destination, U.S. employers that are using them and what types of visa systems are they using them for, the types of jobs and number of positions that are involved with those, the different roles of the federal departments in overseeing this – and I can tell you there's very little – and various things like that. So that's basically the extent of how far they've decided to go on the foreign labor recruiter issue in the Senate version. And I think that ATEST feels that if we couldn't get our full provisions in there, it is at least a step in the right direction that it's still on the radar as a trafficking issue, the role that foreign labor recruiters play in the trafficking of workers in the United States. And so I think – I'm sorry, I lost the agenda, Jesse. Cory, who's next?

Mr. Cory Smith: Sure. The next is Mary with Polaris, document servitude. Mary, are you with us? Okay, so let's go ahead and cover the Protect Act, Melysa, with the Vital Voices?

Ms. Melysa Sperber: Sure. Thanks, everybody, for joining us today. It's really a privilege to have everyone on the call and to talk about the reauthorization. One of the most important law enforcement reforms that we see included in 1301 is an amendment to the Protect Act, which had originally been passed in an effort to provide the U.S. Department of Justice with the ability to prosecute individuals who travel overseas and exploit children in doing so. Courts, since the Protect Act's passage, have interpreted that provision to only apply exclusively to what we would term as sex tourists or travelers and people who are just traveling through a certain country, and as a result they have not been able to prosecute individuals or specifically U.S. citizens who are residing overseas. And so what 1301 does is to amend the Protect Act so as to allow prosecutors to both prosecute individuals traveling temporarily as well as permanently residing overseas who exploit children in that travel, and/or residents. So we see this as a great improvement and an additional tool that prosecutors can use to combat trafficking overseas.

Mr. Cory Smith: Thank you, Melysa, and Mary, are you on for document servitude?

Ms. Mary Ellison: Yes.

Mr. Cory Smith: Okay. Mary, I want to turn it over to you now on document servitude, and Keeli with Safe Horizons. Mary?

Ms. Mary Ellison: Great. Thank you so much, and apologies for the snafu a minute ago. This is Mary Ellison from Polaris Project. I'm the Director of Policy, and we are talking here about Section 201C of the TVPRA S.1301, which is related to document servitude. So currently there is a section in the new TVPRA that amends 18 U.S.C. 1597, related to unlawful conduct with respect to immigration documents.

We know very well that traffickers oftentimes confiscate the immigration documents of their victims to maintain control over them and so we think this is a really great provision that is in S.1301. However what we would like to see is a slight expansion of that to make sure that not only the withholding of immigration documents is a criminal offense but also that personal identification documents, because we know that in the cases of some victims, other types of immigration documents are taken such as driver's licenses or social security cards or other types of documents, and so we just want to make sure that those are covered as well to protect as many trafficking victims as possible. And I think with that, Keeli from Safe Horizons would like to add some comments to this section.

Ms. Keeli Sorensen: Sure. I think it's pretty straightforward so I wanted to keep it brief, but I did want to highlight just an example of someone who was at particular risk when her documents were withheld. Most of our clients, this happens to them all the time regardless of their citizenship, but particularly when you're looking at someone who comes in to work for a diplomat, for instance, they're at very real risk of further harm and exploitation because there are such limited options for redress when they exit the situation. So we did deal with a woman – I'll call her Camille – who was working for a diplomat who was actually in her extended family, and he promised her good wages and gave her a contract, but very clearly within a few months it became known to her that he was not going to honor that contract and not pay her. So she had given him her passport and other identity documents. He refused to give them back. She did get that lovely State Department brochure, which told her where to find information for help, and she pursued that help; and the process of getting those documents back was months and months. It required State Department intervention. And all the while, even when she was out of her trafficking situation, she was really terrified that not having her identity documents, her driver's license, her passport, was going to put her at risk for a potential arrest and deportation when she was just walking around the city. She had actually been refused access to public services because she didn't have her identity documents. She was actually refused access to a public computer at a library because she couldn't produce some form of ID; and she just said that it ended up making her feel more isolated and more victimized, that she didn't have control over these documents. -- And particularly when it's in relation to a diplomat, someone who can exert some other kind of control over you and your family in your home country, potentially, then not having those documents back for months and months was just an extension of the horror she felt from her trafficking situation. So we just really want to stress how excited we are to see where S.1301 has taken this provision and to extend it to make sure to protect all nationalities, all citizens, and different identity documents. Thank you.

Mr. Cory Smith: Great. Thank you so much, Keeli, and thank you, Mary. Also thank you, Melysa, Neha, Annick, and Jesse. These provisions, any one of these provisions, would be an important change to existing law or fixing a loophole to be addressed. This list is non-exhaustive. Obviously there's other areas that many of you may be working on that are also important parts [INDISCERNIBLE 0:19:06]. The bill is of course not perfect. It didn't have everything that everyone wanted, certainly a lot of things missing, certainly things that more would like to be there. This is often the way it is with legislation, and so I wanted to emphasize this isn't of course an exhaustive list and we realize that there's other provisions, but I think it was good just to highlight these different areas to see the importance of the reauthorization. Again, I think it's also important to reiterate that this is the underpinning of the U.S. Government response to ---

Ms. Karen Stauss: Hi, all. Can you hear still? Can someone say if they're able to still hear the call?

Female: We can hear you.

Mr. Jesse Eaves: Yeah, this is Jesse. I can hear you.

Ms. Karen Stauss: Okay. This is Karen Stauss with Free the Slaves. I think that Cory will jump back on but as I happen to be the next person in the agenda, what we wanted to talk about next was some other issues connected to the U.S. government's policy human trafficking and modern slavery that may not have been included in the TVPRA at this point but that are ongoing legislative initiatives. So as soon as Cory's able to jump back on, I'm sure we can let him finish his thought, but I will go ahead with the first one of those which is business transparency legislation. A number of you have already signed on to support H.R.2759 which is the Business Transparency on Slavery and Trafficking Act. It was introduced in the House last summer. The legislation billed on the California Transparency on Supply Chain's Act, which was enacted in California a year-and-a-half ago and went into effect on January 1st of this year, and the federal legislation would require companies to disclose information to the Securities and Exchange Commission, the same information that's covered by the California law and also moving beyond information about supply chains to other risks of human trafficking within business operations such as in their labor recruitment practices and use of goods and services. So as a lot of you know, this type of legislation is facing an uphill and a climate on the Hill that is not very hospitable to business regulation now, basically two years on from the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act. So our strategy has been to really, for this year, to raise awareness in the Senate and the House about the risks of human trafficking that are very closely connected to the operations of multi-national businesses who have a presence in the United States, and to increase support for this legislation from important constituencies, so that includes responsible investors and hopefully with time, more mainstream investors coming on board in support, and of course support from all of you. Some of you are already supporting this but if it is something that you would like to sign on and just be identified as a supporter of this legislation, please do let us know. You can send an email to Aryan, who sent out the invitation to this call, or for more information feel free to be in touch with Cory or with me at karen.stauss – S-T-A-U-S-S – @freetheslaves.net. As far as building momentum for this legislation, there are two briefings that are lined up in the House and the Senate on July 19th or very close to the date of July 19th, and I think something else exciting, not just for this legislation but more broadly for the issue, Senator Carey who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has been planning a series of two hearings in July as well, and this issue of business transparency is one of the topics that he's interested in covering in those hearings. Just for people to be aware of as far as strategy in Congress, there is also a weakened version of this House legislation that appeared in both the House Republican version of the legislation but also in the original bipartisan version of the TVPRA that was introduced in the House. It would not be a requirement for transparency but it would be a mandate for the State Department to work with companies to encourage them to be transparent about the list of provisions that are also included in the stand-alone federal legislation as potentially being required. So that is in a very quick nutshell. I can turn it over to Marina at ECPAT.

Ms. Marina Colby: Thanks, Karen, and hi, everyone. This is Marina Colby. I'm the Director of Public Policy and Government Relations at ECPAT-USA, and ECPAT stands for Ending Child Prostitution and Trafficking. We're a child right's organization with a mission to end child trafficking and all forms of sexual exploitation of children. So another ATEST legislative priority that you may be interested in is H.R.2730, and that is a bill that was introduced by Representative Karen Bass of California and also with a colleague of hers, Tom Marino of Pennsylvania; and the title of the bill is Strengthening the Child Welfare Response to Human Trafficking. As advocates in the field of human trafficking, we all know that we continually need to work at prevention efforts as well as identification of trafficking victims here in the U.S., so we're seeing a growing interest among child welfare advocates, agencies, as well as the juvenile justice system, to be better able to identify and respond to child cases of trafficking and interact with the child welfare system and the courts and the juvenile justice system. So to that end, ATEST is supporting House Bill 2730. We've also had a national call on this – perhaps several of you joined that call – about a week ago, and we are circulating a letter of support, an NGO letter of support for this legislation; and if you haven't already and if you wish to sign on to this letter of support that we will circulate among Congressional offices to seek even more cosponsors, please do contact Aryan. She was our colleague that sent out the invitation for this call. And just a really quick synopsis – this legislation

seeks to engage the child welfare system as a vital state actor in efforts to prevent and then respond to human trafficking, and we see this as a really critical first step to ensure that child welfare agencies, one, that they have the tools to understand and serve the unique needs of victims of human trafficking; and two, that they actually prioritize it within their work and within their agencies. So currently we have 11 cosponsors on the bill. We do have bipartisan co-sponsorship of the bill and we are definitely seeking much, much more of that. The bill currently sits with the House Weighs and Means Committee and the subcommittee on Human Resources, and this subcommittee is chaired by Geoff Davis of Kentucky. If any of you have any relationships with that office, that would be greatly helpful in our efforts. And so as I mentioned, we're currently at this very moment seeking your support on [INDISCERNIBLE] to distribute among more congressional offices to garner even more cosponsors of this legislation, so please do take a look at the legislation, H.R.2730, and please offer your support. Thank you.

Mr. Cory Smith: Thank you, Marina, and just one quick reminder also on the business transparency legislation – we will be holding a national call Thursday, June 28th, at 2pm Eastern, so watch your emails for information. It'll be the same service as we're using for this call, and there will be more information about the call-in number and pass code, and the agenda for that call will focus on advocacy, just drilling down on what Karen from Free the Slaves discussed earlier, so I wanted to flag that also. And thank you, Marina, on the child welfare legislation. Now I'm going to turn it over to Neha on foreign labor recruiters.

Ms. Neha Misra: Thanks, Cory. So everyone, again, this is Neha Misra, the Senior Specialist for Migration and Human Trafficking Programs at the Solidarity Center, which is an international labor rights NGO. On foreign labor recruiters, as I mentioned earlier, there's not as much momentum as we would like to see but we're working in coalition with a number of groups to keep the issue of the role of foreign labor recruiters and trafficking of workers on the agenda, and one way we're doing that is just trying to, as I said, work in coalition with other groups like the International Labor Recruiters Working Group; and just last week we supported an initiative of the AFL-CIO to try to get the Labor HHS Appropriations Committee to vote down an amendment that stops funding to the Department of Labor to implement some new rules in the HTP program that actually would have provided for the regulation of foreign labor recruiters. Unfortunately we lost that. But we hope this year to put together a number of education tools, very user-friendly, and with a lot of information to respond to some of the issues, objections, concerns that we've heard from members of Congress about regulating foreign labor recruiters. So if anybody is interested in working with us on that further, please feel free to email me. It's the first initial n and then my last name misra – M-I-S-R-A – @solidaritycenter.org. But we appreciate the support that everyone's already given on this issue and we look forward to continue working with you. I think IJM is next – Annick?

Ms. Annick Febrey: Yes, thanks Neha. Again, this Annick Febrey, the Legislative Affairs Manager with International Justice Mission. Another bill that we've been working on was introduced by Senator Blumenthal earlier this spring, and it's S.2234 called the End Trafficking and Government Contracting Act, and this was Section 111 in the TVPRA that was expanded and introduced as a standalone. As many of you are probably aware, there's currently 69,000 third-country nationals serving on U.S. military bases overseas. The U.S. government contracts out our base support operations to a handful of prime contractors here in the U.S. who then subcontract out the majority of their work, and so the subcontractors often use fraudulent labor recruiters to employ workers and as a result, the majority of those third-country nationals are in fact trafficked into working on bases in combat zones. So this bill requires the prime contractors to be accountable for all the actions of their subcontractors including implementing compliance plans to prevent trafficking as well as investigating alleged abuses and publicly reporting the results of those investigations. The bill has passed the House just a couple weeks ago and there's ten sponsors in the Senate, so we're optimistic about its movement in the near future. If you have any questions about this or would like to help out or just have questions that you would like more info, feel

free to send Aryan a note. You can just respond to the announcement about this call. And with that, I'll turn it over to Mary to talk about the hotline.

Ms. Mary Ellison: Hi, everyone. Mary Ellison again with Polaris Project, and we wanted to give you all an update on what's been happening at the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. We just published our 2011 Annual Report last week, and we would encourage you all to go to our website – polarisproject.org – to download the most recent report, the 2011 Annual Report. So some highlights from the report include that the NHTRC hotline answered 19,427 calls last year and connected 2,945 potential victims of human trafficking to services and support. This represents a 64% increase in call volume from the previous year and what we're most excited to report is that the calls to the hotline by self-identifying victims of human trafficking has increased nearly 61% over 2010, so we're seeing a lot more trafficking victims calling on their own behalf and we're really excited to make sure that they do get connected to services and get help. Of the calls that we did receive and identify as human trafficking, 52% of these cases were sex trafficking, and what I think is significant is that 48% were cases of either labor trafficking, which represented about 18%, or labor exploitation, which represented 30%. And so while we're seeing a lot of trafficking cases, we're also seeing that labor exploitation is alive and well in the United States. In addition, we had about 46% of the cases were U.S. citizens and about 36% were foreign nationals, of those where we actually knew their nationality. The other remaining percentage was unknown. We did receive calls from all 50 states and from the District of Columbia, and the states where potential human trafficking was most frequently reported were California, Texas, Florida, and New York. We received 578 crisis calls where there was an immediate threat of danger or harm to a victim of human trafficking and an immediate response was required. So we'd just like to make sure that everyone has a chance to download that report and certainly to call us as you need to, and we're happy to be there to serve 24/7 as a resource for the country. Thank you.

Mr. Cory Smith: Great. Thank you so much, Mary, and as you all out across the country know very well, there's a tremendous amount of activity going on at the federal and state level, local level. You've heard a lot of the initiatives that are going on at the federal level in addition to the TVPRA. Again, just follow up with Aryan. All of you should have her email through the announcement for these calls. It's probably the easiest, and she can direct you to the most appropriate to answer or address your email. I apologize for dropping off a bit ago and thanks, [INDISCERNIBLE], for picking up quickly. I was just going to kind of end by saying that as far as talking about the TVPRA, and we have plenty of time coming up for questions, but you know closing out on the discussion of the reauthorization, the TVPA, it's very much an issue and unacceptable that we haven't reauthorized this bill. It lapsed in September of last year and this year we released the Trafficking in Persons Report, and as I was starting to say, one of the minimum standards, you know, what we judge other countries by is the TVPA. And so the fact that we're here and now in June of 2012 without this bill is a real problem, and I think we're all committed to working to get this bill reauthorized in a bipartisan fashion. We're all committed also to get this impasse resolved and to do what's best for the victims, which is what everyone here cares about. It's why all of you are on the phone. And so I just wanted to finish and say that and hope that all of you will work to get cosponsors to join the Senate bill, and we can all work to get this impasse resolved and to move forward in the U.S. response to trafficking. So with that, I know we've given you a lot of information and I know a lot of people are doing work on all of these [INDISCERNIBLE], and without you none of this could be possible. You are the people that can get this done. You are the constituents outside of D.C. And with that, operator, I wanted to open up and turn it over to you to open up the call for questions.

Operator: Alrighty. Ladies and gentlemen, if you have a comment or question, please press zero-one on our telephone keypad. Once again, it is zero-one on your telephone keypad.

Mr. Cory Smith: And while we're waiting for questions, remember that we will have an audio of this call available soon and that will go out by email. So, operator?

Operator: Our first question comes from Devin. Go ahead, Devin?

Devon: Hi. Thank you so much, Cory, for this update. It's been extremely helpful. I just wanted to bring it back around to sort of the likelihood of the TVPRA moving forward and sort of when we'll know for sure whether or not we're going to see a full reauthorization bill this year or just a sort of one-line reauth – if you could just get into sort of the details of that.

Mr. Cory Smith: Absolutely, and thank you for the question and for being on today's call. I think as we go through the summer, you know, it's an election year that's typically in August you have a recess in both chambers in the House and Senate. In an election year, after Memorial Day not a lot gets done, not a lot of floor time, so I think one is to move the Senate bill focus. That's I know our focus. The hurdle is high but it's possible to get this bill [INDISCERNIBLE] those sponsors to move it. We would then need some sort of vehicle to attach it to because you're not going to be able to get floor time. It's the oxygen of getting things done and there's just not a lot at all left. So having said that, it's not easy but it's possible. I think that as more time goes by, Devin, getting to your question, I think you'll see more and more interest and attention to the idea of a straight reauthorization. There is a conscious kind of time-sensitive nature to this with the funding levels and wanting to have continuing funding levels. I know many of you face challenges on the funding side, whether it's donor or federal, state, and that's an issue. So I think as time goes by this summer, I can't say with any certainty, but as time goes by and if you don't have movement or if the impasse is not overcome, then you see a greater and greater likelihood of the straight reauthorization, which would be again a one-sentence and you'd have to have agreement by both sides, and then you would need to have a vehicle to attach that to. Do we have another question over here?

Operator: Yes. Our next question is from Katarina Rosenblatt. Go ahead.

Ms. Katariina Rosenblatt: Hi. Thank you, and thank you for all the work that you all are doing. I'm survivor and I have a program From Survivors to Survivors for domestic minor sex trafficking – There is Hope for Me. And the question that I have is, what's the work being done for the domestic minors on this bill? I know that they were being added, and American citizens. Is that one of the reasons that there's an impasse? And also, what about family reunification services because I'm seeing out of the cult that I'm working with right now, out of eight girls, the majority are not in foster care. They are going back to their families, and so there needs to be more work done for family reunification services, and food stamps just don't go far enough.

Mr. Cory Smith: Right. Thank you. Well, really, really good points and really good questions. I'm going to start and then I'm going to turn it over on the domestic minor sex trafficking issue to my colleagues, Mary and Marina. The only thing I would say is the impasse is a bigger issue between the House and Senate, and issues around the bill that have been introduced. Having said that, there was language, as you referenced, that was included in the Senate bill for domestic minors of sex trafficking, but it is not all of the language. I think the feeling is that that issue can be resolved between Senator Cornyn and then Leahy and others, but it's not the issue that's the impasse. So I'll turn it over to Mary and Marina, who are really our experts on this issue. So Mary? Marina?

Ms. Mary Ellison: Sure. This is Mary Ellison from Polaris Project again. So as noted in Senate Bill 1301, it's section 231 that pertains to assistance for domestic minor sex trafficking, and we have done a side-by-side comparison with S.596, which was the standalone Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Victims bill. So the main differences between what was in the standalone and what's in the TVPRA section 231 is, I would say it's two-fold. One is that the provisions that are in the TVPRA don't allocate as much money as was in the standalone bill. The other big difference is that the standalone housed the program within the Department of Justice whereas the section within the TVPRA would house it within the

Department of Health and Human Services. So that is sort of what's happening with the bill itself, and as Cory referenced, there have been conversations between Senator Cornyn and Senator Leahy's office, and also Senator Wyden who was a chief sponsor of S.596; and I think to talk more about some of the issues affecting children and child trafficking victims, Marina probably would want to jump in and talk a bit about some other legislation.

Ms. Marina Colby: Yeah. Thanks, Mary. And I think that was really covered under our other legislative priority, the standalone bill that's currently pending on the House side, H.R.2730, that really does focus on the child welfare system and strengthening the response from the state child welfare agencies to one, identify – be able to identify victims of trafficking; and then to have the tools, the training, resources flow to them to be able to serve them properly. So that's why we're really seeking broad-based support to get this ball rolling, and it is just the first step in terms of engaging the child welfare system and there's a lot more work to do, but we really seek your support in pushing H.R.2730. Thank you.

Mr. Cory Smith: Thanks. And did any of the other speakers on the call want to address the family reunification question?

Ms. Marina Colby: This is Marina, and I would say H.R.2730 does not specifically address that issue but there is a section in there that mandates HHS to work with service providers in the area that you focus on, and child welfare, juvenile justice, to develop a best practices toolkit in order for the federal level HHS to become a stronger leader in this area, so there definitely is a role to learn from what's happening in the field and to be able to better inform policy and programming in the future. So I would say that the family reunification issue could definitely fall within the work that would go into designing a best practices toolkit.

Mr. Cory Smith: Great, thank you, Marina.

Ms. Katariina Rosenblatt: Yeah, I'd love to be a part of that.

Mr. Cory Smith: And also, folks, if any of you have a question that we don't get to because of the time limitations today, or if you feel like it wasn't clear, just follow up again with Aryan and she can farm it out to us, and if we don't know we'll find someone that does know the answer. So thank you for your question, Ma'am. Operator, next question?

Operator: Okay, our next question is from Tomás Lares. Go ahead.

Mr. Tomás Lares: Sure, hi. I'm Tomás. I'm the chairman of the Orlando Rescue and Restore Coalition and we were wondering if you see organ trafficking and illegal adoptions ever being added to the TVPA?

Mr. Cory Smith: Well, I can start with this and I welcome my colleague, David, may still be on the call also to chime on this, but I know there was originally discussion and interest in the organ trafficking in the House version of the bill that didn't ultimately happen. I think there's some other initiatives under way to have standalone legislation, but there was since in the beginning of including it, I don't think there was necessarily any opposition. The proponents of the language in the House I think decided that it was a better fit in standalone legislation. Obviously it's part of the preliminary protocol and that's something that has been an issue and an interest in addressing, and I think everyone is supportive of that; I think it's just what's the best vehicle to address the needs of the victims. I don't know, David or others, if anyone wanted to add anything on organ trafficking.

Mr. David Abramowitz: Yes. This is David Abramowitz from Humanity United. I know that Ms. Ross-Latinen had standalone legislation that she introduced last Congress and my understanding is that she and her staff have been continuing to work on that legislation, in particular looking at various criteria that would be used to judging whether a country had been doing enough in the organ trafficking area as well as other ways to address this issue, but they continue to refine their approach, which is one of the reasons that it didn't come up on consideration in the House side. I would say that the question about exactly how human organ trafficking fits into the Palermo Protocol is one which, you know, there's been some reference to it and there are certain abuses where it's clear that it does fall, but I think that's one of the issues is the degree to which human organ trafficking and all of its manifestations, because there are many different issues that come out of that, as I'm sure you know, should be contained within the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

Mr. Cory Smith: Thank you, David. And, sir, did that get through all your questions, the organ trafficking. Is there anything else?

Mr. Tomás Lares: Yes, also the illegal adoptions.

Mr. David Abramowitz: Yeah, this is David Abramowitz again. Obviously there has been a lot of discussion regarding international adoptions where there have been violations of various aspects of either national or international law that amount to human trafficking. In general, the issues around international adoption have been handled in a different framework, through the Hague Convention on International Adoption which tries to create a framework for preventing international adoptions from becoming abused in a variety of different ways, including involving payments and other things that amount to human trafficking. So for the most part it's been handled through that particular situation, which there's a number of national U.S. laws as well as other laws in other countries that address these issues, but obviously there have been a number of horrific cases that have left people feeling that there perhaps should be some sort of criminal sanction directly on particular individuals who are wrongdoers.

Mr. Tomás Lares: Yes. Absolutely.

Mr. Cory Smith: Thank you, David. Operator, next question?

Operator: Our next question is from Joanne Anton. Go ahead, Joanne.

Ms. Joanne Anton: Hello. Thank you. This question is for Jesse Eaves from World Vision and it's a follow-up to his comments on Section 103 of the TVPA, which discusses collaboration with foreign governments. I just wanted to clarify that it is a five-year window they're looking at and to ask if there were any other preliminary criteria that had been established.

Mr. Cory Smith: I think Jesse may have had to jump off for another conflict. If Jesse's not on – and Jesse will speak up – but if not, Annick from International Justice Mission, can answer. Jesse?

Ms. Annick Febrey: This is Annick. Jesse actually had to jump off but I'm happy to take that. There's actually no time window on the provision that's in the bill itself. There are a handful of stipulations. There's still the same criteria that was in the standalone bill in order to enter into a compact, but we're not looking at a particular authorization that would be – my assumption is it would be the same timeframe as the bill itself, which right now is a four-year authorization.

Ms. Joanne Anton: Thank you.

Mr. Cory Smith: All right, next question, operator?

Operator: Next question is from Giselle Rodriguez. Go ahead.

Ms. Giselle Rodriguez: Yeah, fine. This is Giselle with a protocol issue against human trafficking, and one of the things I remember that happened the last we had a conversation regarding the TVPA was some of the changes that the House had made in regards to labor trafficking, and one of the things that they had possibly suggested was not making the recruiters accountable for any potential labor trafficking scenarios, and also basically dismantling this report that this report that the Department of Labor does every single year regarding products that are made using either forced labor or child labor. Is that still in the bill or has that been amended?

Mr. Cory Smith: Neha?

Ms. Neha Misra: Hi, sorry, I was in mute. I actually don't think it's in the bill. I think the Department of Labor report is still intact the way it was, but somebody correct me if I'm wrong. And then the foreign labor recruiters thing, I mean, the House version originally had in all those provisions I mentioned earlier on foreign labor recruiters including the disclosure and the fees, and then it got cut in Committee; and as far as I know in the House version, there's nothing really related to foreign labor recruiters. It's just in the Senate version, the [INDISCERNIBLE] study. And then there is something about fraud in foreign labor recruiting, and Melysa, maybe you could talk about that because I don't know that piece as well. But somebody else correct me if I'm wrong, I'm pretty sure the Department of Labor report stays the way it was, and that provision is not in there that you mentioned.

Ms. Melysa Sperber: Sure. So this is Melysa from Vital Voices. There are two very, very small provisions related to fraud and foreign labor contracting, one that adds [INDISCERNIBLE] crime to the RICO statutes as well as one that strengthens it within the context of the immigration nationality code. So I can certainly follow-up with you and point you towards those two specific sections, but they are rather minor and don't achieve what we were seeking, certainly in the more robust version of regulation of recruiters, which we see as an escalating danger to people vulnerable to trafficking.

Ms. Giselle Rodriguez: Definitely. Thank you.

Mr. Cory Smith: Great. Operator, do we have another question?

Operator: We have one more question in the queue and it's from Pat Zerega. Go ahead, Pat.

Ms. Pat Zerega: Hi. This is Pat Zerega from Mercy Investment Services. You mentioned earlier about how we get into what's commonly known as silly-miss season during the elections and not much goes on. I'm wondering if there's been any thought to raise awareness at the election at either the Presidential level and/or state elections with either questions put out for debates or a question to all candidates to answer, and then we could post them on our websites?

Mr. Cory Smith: Well, I think that's an excellent question and I do think, in fact, if email Aryan, I know of a couple individuals that have been working on an initiative around the elections and raising up human trafficking with the debates and all the media attention that goes on around the issue. The other thing I think that's really important is the administration, the current administration, has a role here in helping move the Trafficking Victim Protection Act forward, so we also need to hear from them and have their involvement. Others may want to speak to this but I know there is an initiative. I don't have the information right in front of me but I can certainly, if you email, put you in touch with folks. Do any of the other folks on the call have any ideas about any initiatives around that. Okay, well if you can email – what was your name again? Pat?

Ms. Pat Zerega: Pat Zerega. Sure.

Mr. Cory Smith: Okay. If you can email, we'll definitely – I'll put you in touch and get you some information, Pat.

Ms. Pat Zerega: Great.

Mr. Cory Smith: Okay, well at that, I think we are going to close the call. It's exactly 3 o'clock. I wanted to thank my colleague, Aryan Bocquet, who put this entire call together. I think we had around 150 organizations that RSVPed, and as any of you know that have put together anything, it's a lot of work and logistics. So thank you so much, Aryan, for all the work on this call. Thanks to the speakers and most of all thanks to all of you around the country that are working hard to address this issue, and you know, we're all doing this work for the victims, for the survivors, and if you all can keep it up, we will keep in touch and let you know of any action items. There'll be plenty of other information from all these other initiatives that are going on. There's a lot of amazing, fantastic work that everyone is doing together, and we'll keep in touch and definitely send information about the TVPRA, and please contact your Senator to be sure they're on the bill; if not, get them on the bill, and we can move this forward, get this [INDISCERNIBLE] resolved and move on and get these other bills passed as well. We're not going to wait for the reauthorization to get these other bills done and that's why we're doing a lot of this work now and working with -- also to get these independent bills passed to continue the work. So thanks again. Watch your email for more information based on this call and the audio recording, and please make note of the business transparency call next week, the 28th, and watch your email for follow-up information on that and other advocacy action around the summer and into the fall. So thanks, and we'll talk soon. – And we'll close the call, operator.

Operator: All righty. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining today's conference call. That would conclude today's meeting. Thank you and have a nice day.