



Alliance To End Slavery & Trafficking

Statement | March 19, 2020

Human Trafficking Survivors Deserve to Be Compensated for Their Expertise

The United States House of Representatives recently introduced the bipartisan Leveraging Information on Foreign Traffickers Act (LIFT Act), which in part extends the mandate for the Advisory Council on Human Trafficking to 2025. The McCaul Amendment to the LIFT Act would authorize compensation for the Survivor Advisory Council members. The Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST) issued the following statement in support.

The United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, established by the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) in 2015, is comprised of sex and labor human trafficking survivors representing diverse lived experiences who provide recommendations on national anti-trafficking initiatives and legislation. The survivor members are appointed for two-year terms and though they have contributed critical feedback and analysis on the United States' federal anti-trafficking strategy, they have never been compensated for their time and work.

The Amendment, sponsored by Congressman Michael McCaul of Texas and heavily supported by Chairman Engel, would provide meaningful recognition and recompense for the expertise and labor that the Advisory Council members provide to strengthen our nation's efforts on combating human trafficking. As experts in the human trafficking field, the members' time and work deserve to be financially compensated. If we are serious about promoting and fostering survivor leadership in the anti-trafficking movement, we must remunerate survivor advocates. ATEST strongly supports the McCaul Amendment and urges Congress to adopt it.

Ima Matul, former member of the U.S. Advisory Council and Survivor Leadership Program Manager at the Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (Cast) explains, "Human trafficking survivors are actively working in the anti-trafficking movement. Having learned through lived experience, they are the experts who know firsthand what might work to prevent and early identify victims of this crime. However, survivors receive countless requests for their services without compensation, putting survivors at risk of re-exploitation. The McCaul Amendment is a significant step that the U.S. government must take to ensure survivors of trafficking are compensated for their work."

The Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST) is a U.S.-based coalition that advocates for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery in the U.S. and around the world. ATEST is comprised of the following organizations: Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST), Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), Free the Slaves, Human Trafficking Institute, National Network for Youth (NN4Y), Polaris, Safe Horizon, Solidarity Center, T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, United Way, Verité and Vital Voices Global Partnership.

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