



April 30, 2020

Honorable José E. Serrano, Chair | Honorable Robert Aderholt, Ranking Member
 House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies

Honorable Jerry Moran, Chair | Honorable Jeanne Shaheen, Ranking Member
 Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies

The Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST) thanks you for your leadership in the fight to end child labor, forced labor and human trafficking. We appreciate your efforts to pass legislation and provide resources to federal agencies engaged in combating these horrific crimes.

We seek your assistance in funding essential programs in the FY21 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies bill. The Justice Department plays a vital role in investigating and prosecuting trafficking crimes. These cases are often complicated and involve lengthy legal proceedings requiring additional resources for prosecutors as well as for victims who often experience severe trauma requiring intensive therapy and rehabilitation. Many victims require comprehensive case management provided by victim service organizations to see them through their recovery and help them navigate the legal system.

We are grateful for your support to increase investments in these areas, and to continue to ensure that the Department of Justice works to strengthen collaborative community responses to human trafficking.

ATEST FY21 Appropriations Request Summary: CJS				
Department	Program	FY20 Enacted	Authorized Funding	FY21 Appropriation Request
	Office of Justice Programs / State And Local Law Enforcement Assistance Victim Services Grants and Human Trafficking Task Forces		\$98,000,000	\$98,000,000

Justice Department	Office of Justice Programs / State And Local Law Enforcement Assistance Minor Victim Services Grants		\$8,000,000	\$10,000,000
	Legal Activities/ Civil Rights Division: Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit	\$5,300,000	n/a	\$8,000,000
	Federal Bureau of Investigation			Report Language (see below)
	U.S. Attorney's Offices			Report Language (see below)

Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs / State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Victim Services Grants and Human Trafficking Task Forces: \$144,000,000 |

The National Human Trafficking Hotline reported a 25 percent increase in calls in 2018 from 2017. Robust resources are needed to ensure that as more survivors come forward, they receive appropriate responses and services. Existing victim services grant programs at the Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) are shaped by the OVC’s long-term institutional knowledge on sex and labor trafficking issues. OVC has done an efficient and effective job administering grants for trafficking survivors and law enforcement funded task forces for more than 15 years, and should retain this role without disruption. Additionally, in light of increased processing times for immigration relief for trafficking survivors, more funding is required to sustain services for clients over this extended period.

At the time that ATEST initially submitted these appropriations requests, we were pre-COVID-19, which has since drastically changed the landscape for serving human trafficking victims and survivors. In FY2019, OVC disbursed just under \$68,000,000 in grants for human trafficking providers. We anticipate a 35% decrease in funding for service providers in the anti-trafficking movement as part of the economic fallout from this global health crisis. We are seeing unprecedented unemployment rates and significantly heightened client financial needs in all areas, including social and legal needs, and thus expect a significant increase in the need for sustained comprehensive services. We have accordingly included a 35% increase of funds for FY21 over what was disbursed in FY2019 (approximately \$24,000,000), which, when combined with the President’s overall request for \$120,000,000 for human trafficking service provision and law enforcement, equals \$144,000,000.

Given the increased vulnerability to trafficking due to high unemployment rates and general financial, legal and social instability, we request that no less than \$120,000,000 of the appropriation be for victim services, and that the majority of OVC money be continued to be spent supporting direct services for all forms of trafficking in persons including intensive case management, legal and shelter services. We also request that OVC review monies granted to law enforcement task forces to ensure task forces are adopting victim-centered approaches. Proposed Report Language: The bill provides \$144,000,000 for the Victims of Trafficking Grant program, of which no less than \$120,000,000 is for victim services. The \$10,000,000 request for minor victim services grants is included within the \$144,000,000 appropriations request for victim services overall.

Office of Justice Programs / State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Minor Victim Services Grants: \$10,000,000 | Specialized, comprehensive, trauma-informed, gender-specific assistance to minor victims of human trafficking is critical. Minors face significant hurdles recovering from the abuse and trauma they've endured. Law enforcement has identified the lack of specialized housing programs throughout the U.S. as the greatest obstacle in effectively prosecuting child traffickers. The Attorney General is authorized to provide grant funding to serve sex-trafficked minors. We request additional funds to support services, training and outreach for labor-trafficked youth. We further request that the bill contain statutory language to make this funding available for two years instead of just one year. Proposed Report Language: The bill provides \$10,000,000 for Minor Victims of Trafficking Grant program, of which \$8,000,000 is for victim services grants for sex trafficked minors, and an additional \$2,000,000 for victim services grants for labor trafficked minors. The Committee encourages DOJ to work in close coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services to encourage collaboration and reduce duplication of effort.

Legal Activities / Civil Rights Division, Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit (HTPU): \$8,000,000 | The HTPU needs increased funding to handle its growing caseload (a 619 percent increase in cases filed since the Unit began work in 2007). These cases are resource-intensive because they are procedurally complex, and involve multiple jurisdictions and defendants. With increased funding, HTPU will be able to more effectively investigate and prosecute all forms of trafficking and modern slavery. Additionally, the Abolish Human Trafficking Act (P.L. 115-392), signed into law on December 21, 2018, designates an assistant U.S. attorney in every U.S. Attorney's Office across the United States to prosecute human trafficking cases. HTPU will be responsible for training and coordinating these prosecutors. Proposed Report Language: The Committee provides \$8,000,000 for the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit (HTPU) and encourages HTPU and the Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams to continue working with victim service providers and non-governmental organizations to ensure victim needs are prioritized as part of the overall strategy to combat human trafficking and forced labor in the United States. Additional resources provided are to implement section 15 of P.L. 115-392. Furthermore, the Committee directs the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit (HTPU) to report to the Committees on Appropriations no later than 120 days following enactment of this Act on (1) the total number of human trafficking cases it prosecuted or assisted in prosecuting within the last three years disaggregated by type of trafficking, (2) the number of Assistant U.S. Attorneys who received training on human trafficking within the last three years, and, (3) the number of Assistant U.S. Attorneys who received training on restitution for human trafficking victims within the last three years.

Federal Bureau of Investigation: Report Language | The FBI remains the premier federal law enforcement agency fighting human trafficking and modern slavery. The presence of the FBI in any trafficking investigation significantly increases the chances of success. Furthermore, with trafficking investigations often crossing state lines, the presence of the FBI becomes critical. Proposed Report Language: *The Committee recognizes the complex nature of human trafficking investigations and encourages the Director to allocate additional resources for human trafficking cases and designate a lead agent in each field office as a point of contact for slavery and human trafficking investigations.*

Legal Activities / United States Attorneys: Report Language

1) Consistent with the reauthorization of the Trafficking Victim Protection Act's requirement that each U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) designate an Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) as a lead human trafficking prosecutor, we request that the subcommittee include report language encouraging the prompt implementation and that the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys provide sufficient support and training and technical assistance to the designated AUSAs to enable each respective jurisdiction to improve coordination and communication. Proposed Report Language: *The Committee directs the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys, in consultation with the United States Attorneys, to provide sufficient support and training and technical assistance to each Assistant U.S. Attorney designated as the lead human trafficking prosecutor, consistent with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.*

2) We request that the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security, develop a process to enable survivors with T-visas to obtain an expedited letter of support from the Department of Justice when their criminal case is closed. Proposed Report Language: *Designating a point of contact will improve communication and coordination within each jurisdiction, including victim service organizations, in order to better serve the victims of human trafficking and forced labor. The Committee directs the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security, to develop a process to enable survivors with T-visas to obtain an expedited letter of support from the Department of Justice when their criminal case is closed.*

As a champion for the victims of child labor, forced labor and sex trafficking, you understand the complexities of these issues and the resources needed to respond. We have carefully vetted our requests to focus on the most important and effective programs. We thank you for your consideration of these requests and your continued leadership. If you have any questions, please contact ATEST Coalition Co-Chairs Anita Teekah (Anita.Teekah@safehorizon.org) or Terry FitzPatrick (terry.fitzpatrick@freetheslaves.net).

Sincerely,

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 Worldwide

Verité

Vital Voices Global Partnership

ATEST is a U.S.-based coalition that advocates for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery around the world.