



May 18, 2020

Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair | Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Honorable Roy Blunt, Chair | Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, 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. Due to underlying vulnerabilities, those most at risk of, and victim to, trafficking and exploitation will experience disproportionate impacts as a result of COVID-19 in the short, medium, and long-term. With this in mind, we seek your assistance in funding essential programs in the FY21 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. The number of trafficking victims significantly exceeds the availability of services at the Departments of Labor (DOL), Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED). ATEST recommends robust funding and accountability for programs at these key departments to fulfill the highest priority mandates of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and related legislation.

ATEST FY21 Appropriations Request Summary: LHHS				
Department	Program	FY20 Enacted	Authorized Funding	FY21 Appropriation Request
Labor	International Labor Affairs Bureau	\$96,125,000		\$130,040,000
	Employment & Training Administration			Report Language (see below)
Health & Human	Administration for Children and	\$27,255,000	\$24,000,000	\$50,000,000

Services	Families, Victim Services			
	Administration for Children and Families, National Human Trafficking Hotline	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$5,000,000
	Administration for Children and Families, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act	\$132,400,000	\$152,420,000	\$165,000,000 and Report Language (see below)
	Administration for Children and Families Office of Trafficking in Persons			Report Language (see below)

Department of Labor

International Labor Affairs Bureau: \$130,040,000 | The Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) is an essential part of the U.S. government’s international response to forced labor, human trafficking and child labor. ILAB’s mandates touch on key elements of partnership, prevention, protection and prosecution, such as child labor, international labor diplomacy, international economic affairs, and labor-related trade policy. Through highly respected research, grant making and policy development work, ILAB identifies cases of goods reported on the annual “List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor.” ATEST was pleased that Congress recognized the need for increased resources for ILAB’s critical work in FY2020 and encouraged Congress to continue to enhance efforts to identify . In FY2021, we request \$27,000,000 for the administration of ILAB, \$59,000,000 for the Child Labor and Forced Labor program, \$36,000,000 for the Workers’ Rights program, and \$8,040,000 for program evaluation.

Employment and Training Administration: Report Language | Labor trafficking affects both U.S. citizens and foreign nationals working across many industries, most commonly domestic work, agriculture, manufacturing, janitorial services, hotel services, construction, health and elder care, hair and nail salons, and strip club dancing. DOL needs resources to protect and support victims, particularly with much needed skills training and job placement services, as well as providing referrals to shelter, medical care, mental health services, legal services, and case management. Proposed Report Language: The Committee encourages the Employment and Training Administration to increase access and eligibility to employment and training services for survivors of all forms of human trafficking as required by Sec. 107(b) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (P.L. 106-386). The Committee also encourages the development and integration of training to identify potential signs of trafficking and referral options as a regular activity for State Farmworker Monitor Advocates, and during the provision of relevant services to particular at-risk populations, including through the Youth Build, Job Corps and Reentry Employment Opportunity programs. The Committee also encourages the Department to continue and expand its pilot initiative to develop and support networks of service providers in collaboration with HHS and DOJ.

Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children and Families, Victim Services (ACF): \$50,000,000 | ACF fulfills mandates of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act to 1) Identify and serve victims who are foreign nationals; and, 2) Create specialized case management programs to assist U.S. citizen victims. The number of trafficking victims certified as needing comprehensive, trauma-informed, gender-specific services has risen dramatically but funding for services has not kept pace. We encourage ACF to use a portion of increased funding for legal services for victims. We request that increased funds be utilized equally for services for both foreign national victims and U.S. citizen and legal permanent resident victims, consistent with demonstrated need.

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. 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 55% increase of funds for FY21 over what was disbursed in FY20 (approximately \$23,000,000).

Administration for Children and Families, the National Human Trafficking Hotline: \$5,000,000 | The Trafficking Hotline is a toll-free 24/7 center available to answer calls, online tips and email queries. The Trafficking Hotline collects tips on human trafficking cases, connects victims with anti-trafficking services in their area (such as shelter, case management, and legal services), and, where appropriate, reports actionable tips to law enforcement. The Trafficking Hotline serves both domestic and foreign victims inside the U.S. In 2019, the Trafficking Hotline identified more than 22,300 sex and labor trafficking victims in every state and territory across the United States. The Trafficking Hotline also collects and provides valuable data on human trafficking trends and the prevalence of victims in the U.S. Funding to the Trafficking Hotline has been insufficient to meet the growing call volume. Even in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, as trafficking victims are forced to shelter in place with their abusers, calls to the Trafficking Hotline continue on pace. With states reopening, we expect to these challenges to be exacerbated by the economic effects of COVID-19 that increase the vulnerabilities that make people susceptible to human trafficking. Accordingly, we request that \$5,000,000 be appropriated for the National Human Trafficking Hotline, while preserving victim services funding.

Administration for Children and Families, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act: \$165,000,000 | The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act has laid the foundation for a national system of services for vulnerable young people who are at risk of becoming or have already been victims of exploitation and trafficking. These programs provide homeless and victimized youth with hope, safety, healing, and opportunities for a new life through: emergency shelters, family reunification when safe, aftercare, outreach, education and employment, health care, behavioral and mental health, transitional housing, and independent housing options. These programs are often in the best position to prevent trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation and provide early identification of victims of these crimes. Congress recognized the critical role that programs funded through RHYA serve to prevent trafficking, identify survivors, and provide services to runaway, homeless and disconnected youth by including a two year reauthorization of RHYA in the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act of 2018. We request \$165,000,000, the level previously authorized, to increase the capacity of programs that serve runaway and homeless youth to address human trafficking (\$140,000,000 for the Consolidated Runaway, Homeless Youth Programs and \$25,000,000 for Prevention Grants to Reduce Abuse of Runaway Youth), and within these funds

designate \$5,000,000 to increase capacity and provide training for service providers to identify and serve exploited and trafficked youth, and \$2,000,000 to conduct the National Study on the Prevalence, Needs and Characteristics of Homeless Youth.

Administration for Children and Families, Office of Trafficking in Persons: Report Language | In establishing the Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP), HHS underscored the importance of coordinating trafficking efforts across the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF works directly with all victims of human trafficking – men, women, children, LGBTQ, foreign nationals and domestic clients – and the diverse needs and vulnerabilities of these populations can only be met by an effective coordinating body networked agency-wide. Proposed Report Language: *Within the funds provided, the Committee encourages ACF to hire sufficient full time employees to support the Office of Trafficking in Persons and coordinate trafficking efforts across ACF.*

Administration for Children and Families, Family Youth Services Bureau: Report Language | The process of informing RHYA grantees has restricted the ways in which service providers are able to continue to provide services to vulnerable youth. For the past several years, RHYA grantees have been notified if they will receive a grant or not within one day before a grant period is to begin. This lack of sufficient notice is extremely problematic for agencies and community based organizations working to serve runaway and homeless youth who face higher risks of trafficking and violence. We recommend that the current bureaucratic process be streamlined, so that RHYA grant applicants are notified regarding whether they will receive a grant or not within at least three months in advance of the start date of a grant. Proposed Report Language: *That when awarding funds under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program, the Secretary shall notify all applicants if they were successful or not at least 30 days before the grant is to begin as well as 30 days before an existing grant is set to end.*

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 thoughtfully and comprehensively respond. We have therefore carefully vetted our requests to focus on the most important and effective programs. We thank you for your consideration of these requests and truly appreciate 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.