



April 14, 2021

Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair | Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member
 House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Honorable Patty Murray, Chair | Honorable Roy Blunt, 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 FY22 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 of 2000* and subsequent reauthorizations (TVPA) and related legislation.

ATEST FY22 Appropriations Request Summary: LHHS				
Department	Program	FY21 Enacted	Authorized Funding	FY22 Appropriation Request
Labor	International Labor Affairs Bureau	\$67,325,000		\$130,040,000
	Employment & Training Administration			\$5,000,000 and Report Language (see below)
Health and Human Services	Administration for Children and Families, Victim Services	\$27,755,000		\$50,000,000



Alliance To End Slavery & Trafficking

Health and Human Services	Administration for Children and Families, National Human Trafficking Hotline	\$4,000,000		\$5,000,000
	Administration for Children and Families, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act	\$113,780,000		\$300,000,000 and Report Language (see below)
	Administration for Children and Families Office of Trafficking in Persons			Report Language (see below)
Education	Department of Education Grants to Local Education Agencies, Title I			\$2,000,000
	McKinney-Vento Act Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program	\$101,500,000	\$85,000,000	\$300,000,000

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 but was disappointed when the same did not occur for FY2021. ATEST encourages Congress to continue to enhance efforts to identify goods made with forced labor. For FY2022, 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: \$5,000,000 | The Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA) should conduct a review of all employment readiness, training, and other discretionary programs, and revise program guidance as needed to explicitly include eligibility for trafficking victims where possible, per Sec. 107(b) of the



Trafficking Victims Protection Act (P.L. 106-386). The requested funds should be used to develop and implement a pilot grant program to deliver trauma-informed employment and training services that address particular barriers to service, and challenges to finding employment, faced by survivors of human trafficking. The U.S Advisory Council on Human Trafficking highlighted the need to provide access to employment and training programs to all survivors of human trafficking. In their inaugural report, released in 2016, the council noted that “...after leaving their trafficking situations, survivors [...] can find it difficult to live financially independent. Career development programs help survivors become self-sufficient and provide for their families. When survivors are employed, it positively affects their lives and prevents dependence on public benefits.” We also recommend that the DOL integrate 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.

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. Additionally, funding increases for victim services programs under HHS have never matched the increases provided to programs under DOJ. Both programs are essential to effectively assist victims and survivors and we encourage parity in funding for both programs. While HHS departments have worked efficiently with limited resources to support service providers, further funding would allow HHS to fulfill legislated and related needs of victims more fully. 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.

Service providers across the country have noted a significant increase in the services required by victims and survivors during the COVID-19 crisis. A survey conducted by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (the “OSCE ODIHR Survey”) confirms the increased needs of service providers to effectively assist victims during the pandemic. The crisis has heightened vulnerabilities to exploitation and required providers to work with limited resources to provide expanded services. We are seeing unprecedented unemployment rates and significantly heightened client financial needs in all areas. Both trafficking victims currently receiving services and those newly seeking services have shown an increased need for direct assistance to pay for basic necessities like food and shelter. With the pandemic impacting employment opportunities in all industries where human trafficking survivors have formerly sought employment and stability, we expect a significant increase in the coming years in the need for sustained comprehensive services for all survivors for longer periods of time. Specifically, Data from the Trafficking Hotline showed that in April 2020, the number of crisis trafficking situations increased by more than 40 percent and the number of situations in which people needed immediate emergency shelter nearly doubled. We therefore request an increase in funds in FY22 to \$50,000,000, which will help keep up with the expected needs of trafficking victims and their family members.

Administration for Children and Families, the National Human Trafficking Hotline: \$5,000,000 | The National Human Trafficking Hotline (“Trafficking Hotline”) is a toll-free 24/7 center available to answer calls, text messages, online tips and email queries. The Trafficking Hotline connects victims with anti-trafficking services in their area (such as shelter, case management, and legal services), collects tips on human trafficking cases, and, where appropriate, reports actionable tips to law enforcement. The Trafficking Hotline serves both domestic and foreign victims inside the U.S. In FY20 alone, the Trafficking Hotline identified more than 18,600 sex and labor trafficking victims in every state across the U.S. Funding to the Trafficking Hotline has been insufficient to meet the growing demand. From FY19 to FY20, the hotline saw a 42% increase in incoming contacts, including calls, texts, online chats, emails and online tip forms. During that same period, there was a 17% increase in the number of trafficking victims and survivors who reached out to the Hotline directly. This is particularly meaningful as victims and survivors know their situations and needs better than anyone, giving the Trafficking Hotline the best information and avenue to help. We request \$5,000,000 in FY22 to support the National Human Trafficking Hotline to continue to meet the needs of victims and survivors of human trafficking.

Administration for Children and Families, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act: \$300,000,000 | The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) 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. COVID-19 has only exacerbated the already dire situations of young people experiencing homelessness and human trafficking. Youth and young adults experiencing homelessness are at high risk of acquiring infectious diseases, and their mobility places them at a



higher risk for both contracting and spreading COVID-19. This population is unable to self-isolate or self-quarantine in their tenuous, transient, crowded and unstable situations. These programs provide homeless and victimized youth and young parents 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 \$300,000,000, the level included in the most recently introduced reauthorization bill, the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Human Trafficking Prevention Act, to increase the capacity of programs that serve runaway and homeless youth to address human trafficking (\$225,000,000 for the Consolidated Runaway, Homeless Youth Programs and \$75,000,000 for Prevention Grants to Reduce Abuse of Runaway Youth), and within these funds designate \$20,000,000 to fund a five year demonstration grant designed to increase capacity and local community collaboration 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 Youth Experiencing Homelessness.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) providers are serving young people who need their services and are providing services to meet the unique needs of each young person. The young people in need of RHYA provider services cross systems and siloed funding streams. The needs of young people who experience homelessness are very similar with needs of young people who have experienced the child welfare (CW) and/or juvenile justice (JJ) systems. Young people come to RHYA programs voluntarily and providers will bring them into their services as an RHY young person and then find out days or weeks later that they are CW or JJ involved. This creates a challenge for providers who then have to shift how they fund what services/housing they are providing to the young person based on the youth's current system involvement. On top of this, RHYA providers are told by their grants managers that they are NOT allowed to serve JJ or CW involved youth with any RHYA grant funding-this is true across all programs: Basic Center Programs, Transitional Living Programs, Maternity Group Homes, and Street Outreach Programs. This makes it very challenging to serve all youth in need of RHY services because the data show that most of them are multi system involved.

Proposed Report Language: *The Committee strongly encourages programs to have the ability to serve youth involved in other systems (such as child welfare and juvenile justice) that are not currently housed by that system.*

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 whether 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.*

Department of Education

Department of Education Grants to Local Education Agencies, Title I: \$2,000,000 | The Department of Education interfaces with approximately 50 million elementary and secondary school children each year, placing it in a unique position to identify victims of sex trafficking and forced labor and to prevent the victimization and exploitation of children who might be susceptible. While ED has been able to create some resources for educators without any dedicated federal resources, dedicated funding for the prevention of child trafficking is essential. The funds should be used to develop materials regarding all forms of human trafficking, including sex trafficking and forced labor, to ensure that educators and students are aware of how to identify and address all types of trafficking. Further, we request that ED publish a white paper examining the appropriate role of educators and students, as well as the role of the education system, in preventing, identifying, and supporting child trafficking victims. The outcome of the white paper should inform the development of a model curriculum on the prevention of both sex trafficking and forced labor.

McKinney-Vento Act Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (EHCY): \$300,000,000 | The EHCY removes barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and opportunity for success for homeless children and youth; all of whom are at high risk of human trafficking. The EHCY is effective in addressing youth homelessness. With the support of EHCY grants, local education agencies have provided identification, enrollment and transportation assistance, as well as academic support and referrals for basic services. Unfortunately, the resources directed to child and youth homelessness programs have not been sufficient in recent years. ED reported that during the 2017-2018 school year, public schools identified 1.5 million homeless children and youth—a 15 percent increase over the 3 previous school years. However, only 22 percent of school districts receive support through the EHCY in any given year. As a result, homeless children and youth are under-identified and continue to face significant barriers to school enrollment and continuity.



Under the McKinney-Vento Act’s EHCY, all school districts are required to designate a homeless liaison, who proactively identifies homeless children and youth and connects them with vital resources, including food, housing, and clothing. Because all school districts—even those in communities without youth shelters—must designate a liaison for homeless students, schools are uniquely positioned to identify youth who are being trafficked, or are at risk of being trafficked, and provide connections to services. Yet many liaisons are designated in name only and lack the time and the training to carry out their duties. This lack of capacity is particularly severe in light of the increase in student homelessness due to the COVID-19 crisis. Increasing funding for the EHCY will support a dedicated infrastructure within the nation’s public schools to identify and serve children and youth who are at very high risk of human trafficking, both during the current public health and economic crisis and as the economy is rebuilt.

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

HEAL Trafficking

Human Trafficking Institute

Humanity United Action

McCain Institute for International Leadership

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.