



February 4, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of the Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST), a U.S. based coalition that advocates for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery around the world, we are writing to urge for the following inclusions as you work to complete the final FY2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill.

We request \$136,000,000 for the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), as outlined in the House bill. 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.

We also request \$5,000,000 for 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.

Additionally, we request \$50,000,000 for the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (ACF) victim assistance programs. 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.

We also request \$5,000,000 for the National Human Trafficking Hotline, 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.

We request \$300,000,000 for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, which 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.



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 wish you well as you work to reconcile and pass the next CR and enact a final FY2022 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Act.

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.

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