



To: House Appropriations Subcommittees on National Security, Department of State and Related Programs | Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs

From: Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST)

Date: March 13, 2026

Re: FY27 Recommendations for State Dept. Anti-trafficking Programs

The Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST) thanks you for your leadership in the fight to end forced labor and human trafficking. We are grateful for the support these programs have received for more than 25 years, when Congress first passed the blueprint for America's anti-trafficking response, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing criminal industries in the world, affecting 28 million people and generating more than \$236 billion in annual illicit profits. Traffickers overseas not only harm individuals in other countries, they harm businesses in the U.S. through unfair price competition in international trade. Forced labor scam centers overseas target U.S. households. Forced labor in agriculture, mining and other sectors overseas fuels armed conflict that impacts U.S. national interests. Trafficking overseas forces individuals to flee to the United States to seek safety. The State Department plays a vital role in fighting this global crime, and in doing so, protecting America's security and prosperity. We can eradicate trafficking only by dedicating the necessary resources.

This memo provides concrete State Department recommendations from ATEST, a nonpartisan coalition of leading anti-trafficking organizations working throughout the United States and around the world. ATEST urges Congress to hold the line in FY27 by appropriating not less than the amounts enacted for FY26, and approving increases where possible to meet actual need.

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor | Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

Diplomatic Programs: ATEST recommends not less than the FY26 enacted appropriation of \$23,107,000, though we encourage restoration of higher previous appropriation levels. U.S. leadership through the TIP Office continues to elevate worldwide awareness and advance global responses to human trafficking. These resources are needed to strengthen collaboration with posts and regional bureaus, to enable the TIP Office to encourage foreign governments to comply with minimum standards in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, and to facilitate implementation of the tier ranking system and publication of the annual Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP

Report). Additionally, this funding will support the Senior Policy Operating Group and the President's Interagency Task Force, which the TIP Office convenes, to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts across the U.S. Government. As well, this funding helps support the inclusion of trafficking survivors in U.S. policy development and implementation through the Human Trafficking Expert Consultant Network, and to support efforts to prevent the importation of goods made with child or forced labor through the interagency Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force.

Additionally, we request that up to \$600,000 of this funding be dedicated to support the TIP Office's administration of the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, which was created by Congress in the Survivors of Human Trafficking Empowerment Act (section 115 of Public Law 114-22), and whose mandate has been extended indefinitely by the Abolish Trafficking Reauthorization Act of 2022 (section 102 of Public Law 117-348). The council provides advice and recommendations to the Senior Policy Operating Group and the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking, as well as directly to federal agencies. We applaud the U.S. Government for working with survivors, who are in the best position to analyze and recommend policies that have the greatest impact. This request would fund support staff for council convenings, council member travel expenses and per diem, consulting fees for council members and other authorized activities.

Trafficking in Persons Grants: ATEST recommends not less than the FY26 House Subcommittee-approved appropriation level of \$111,000,000 in International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) funds, to include \$12,500,000 for Child Protection Compacts, and \$25,000,000 for the Program to End Modern Slavery, with an additional \$2,500,000 to combat trafficking in Latin America and the Caribbean. Actual need would warrant a topline grants appropriation of not less than \$142,000,000.

INCLE grants enable nonprofits, non-governmental organizations, public international organizations, and universities to fight human trafficking internationally through prevention programs, training workshops for law enforcement and the judiciary, and legal and strategic support. These grants provide specialized training for law enforcement officers to recognize trafficking and forced labor, conduct investigations, assist with prosecutions, and support victims. These funds are critical to ensuring that victims are identified and protected, especially children; traffickers are convicted; and systems and policies are in place to prevent future trafficking.

Child Protection Compacts support policies and programs that prevent and respond to violence, exploitation, and abuse against children, and measurably reduce the trafficking of minors by building sustainable and effective systems of justice, prevention, and protection. This assistance can be provided in the form of grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts to or with national governments, regional or local governmental units, or non-governmental organizations with expertise in the protection of victims of severe forms of human trafficking.

Congress authorized the Program to End Modern Slavery to advance transformational programs and projects that seek to achieve a measurable and substantial reduction of the prevalence of modern slavery in targeted populations in priority countries.

ATEST recommends that committee report language direct the TIP Office to publish notices of funding opportunities for civil society organizations within the first 120 days of the new fiscal year and ensure all funds are awarded by the end of the same fiscal year to avoid gaps in field program operations.

Proposed Report Language on Counter-Trafficking Integration for All State Department Foreign Assistance Programs: In order to increase efforts by the United States to protect American companies and workers from unfair price competition by other countries where human trafficking occurs in mining, farming, fishing, manufacturing and other businesses, and to increase efforts to safeguard America's homeland by thwarting the use of human trafficking by transnational criminal enterprises and terrorist organizations in ways that undermine the national security of the United States, ATEST recommends that the committee encourage the Secretary of State to incorporate activities to counter trafficking in persons into all strategic foreign assistance and humanitarian programming. This could include encouraging each State Department mission, office, and bureau to incorporate a counter-trafficking perspective and approaches into programs, and project design, when addressing a range of foreign assistance issues.

As a champion for the victims of forced labor and sex trafficking, you understand the complexities of these issues and the resources needed to respond appropriately. We thank you for your consideration and your continued leadership. If you have any questions, please contact ATEST Director Terry FitzPatrick (e-mail terry.fitzpatrick@ATEST-US.org, or 571-282-9913).