INNOCENCE FOR SALE: DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM, HOMELAND SECURITY, AND INVESTIGATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 26, 2014

Serial No. 113–80

Printed for the use of the Committee on the Judiciary

Available via the World Wide Web: http://judiciary.house.gov

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
87–330 PDF WASHINGTON : 2014

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
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MARCH 26, 2014

INNOCENCE FOR SALE: DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM, HOMELAND SECURITY, AND INVESTIGATIONS

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 2141, Rayburn Office Building, the Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Sensenbrenner, Goodlatte, Gohmert, Coble, Bachus, Forbes, Scott, Conyers, and Bass.

Also Present: Representatives Poe and Jackson Lee.

Staff present: (Majority) Allison Halataei, Parliamentarian & General Counsel; Sarah Allen, Counsel; Alicia Church, Clerk; and (Minority) Ron LeGrand, Counsel.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The Subcommittee will come to order. Before making an opening statement, let me reiterate the position of the Chairman and the Committee about non-Subcommittee Member participation, which is as follows.

A Judiciary Committee Member who is not a Member of a Subcommittee may attend a hearing and sit on the dais. That Member may also ask questions of the witnesses, but only if yielded time by a Member of the Subcommittee who is present at the hearing. It will remain the policy of the Committee that we do not allow Members to participate in our hearings if they are not Members of the full Judiciary Committee.

Without objection, the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Poe, and the gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. Jackson Lee, will be permitted to sit on the dais for this hearing and may ask questions of the witnesses if yielded time by a Member of the Subcommittee. And without objection, so ordered.

I yield myself 5 minutes.

We are honored today to have a varied and distinguished panel of witnesses here to discuss a difficult, but critically important, topic, the growing crisis of minor sex trafficking in the United States. Now, let me say that this is something I do not think has received enough congressional and public attention. There is a study that has been done by the FBI that says that over 290,000

American youth are at risk of becoming victims of sex trafficking, and that includes one out of seven runaways from home.

These kids, and I will call them kids, are usually between 12 and 14 years, and what is happening here is that their innocence is being bought and sold for the profit of criminals. And it is something that we have to get public attention to, that we need to legislate more strictly and firmly against. And law enforcement has to be given more tools to be able to track down those who are responsible for this heinous and disgusting crime, prosecute them, and to put them behind bars.

Now, as a result of technology advances, the growth of the Internet and mobile smart phones have greatly facilitated people who want to perpetrate these crimes. So using the Internet for law enforcement purposes I think is absolutely essential. There have been online advertisements as the primary platform for buying and selling sex with minors, and there have been almost 3,000 minor victims that were advertised online for this disgusting practice. That, too, has to stop, and those who put these advertisements online have got to be prosecuted.

Online advertisements for prostitution have created about $45 million of revenue last year, you know, again revenue used in the furtherance of a crime and in the furtherance of selling the innocence of minors for a profit. And I hope that Ms. Pettigrew, who is a survivor of this crime, who has courageously dedicated herself to shining a light on this dark issue, she can help us better understand the unique needs of minor victims of sex trafficking because not only do we have to go after those who perpetrate the crime, but we have to give all the counseling that is necessary to bring the victims back to being able to live a normal, functional, and productive lifestyle.

So this is really an important hearing. It is something that I think that the Subcommittee should devote much of its time and energy to for the rest of this Congress.

And it is now my pleasure to recognize for his opening statement the Ranking Member, Mr. Scott of Virginia.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for convening this hearing. While many Americans know that children are sold for sex overseas, too many believe that our country is immune. There remains a tragic reality and growing problem here as well. We must understand the term "domestic minor sex trafficking" is the commercial exploitation of children through prostitution, pornography, and sexual performance. It is the sex slavery and rape of children for profit.

In its 2006 report, Shared Hope International reminded us that the status of a sex trafficked child is that of a victim, not a criminal. We are talking about some of the most vulnerable, the traumatized, exploited children in need of specialized services and understanding. We need to train law enforcement officials to correctly identify the trafficked children as victims and treat them accordingly. Categorizing sex trafficked children as criminals prevents them from receiving the care they need and re-victimizes them by arresting and charging them for criminal acts done against their will. It also complicates the prosecution of the real criminals, the pimps and johns.

A victim-centric approach is essential to properly crafting the delivery of services for survivors of sex trafficking. Nationally, an estimated 450,000 children run away from home every year, and it is estimated that one out of three teens on the street will be lured toward prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home. This means that statistically, about 150,000 children are lured into prostitution each year, and some estimates put that number closer to 300,000.

These children come from all races, ethnic groups, and religious backgrounds. They span all gender identities, ages, and socioeconomic classes, and they come from abusive households. One study found that almost 60 percent of minors arrested for prostitution in Las Vegas had been molested by family members or were victims of sexual assault, and three-fourths had run away from home prior to arrest.

The trafficked children are often exposed to many immediate and long-term harms, including violence and intimidation, homelessness, addiction to drugs, unplanned pregnancy, impaired health and life span, decreased lifetime earnings, and welfare dependency. These harms come at a cost to the State and local governments, which increases the length of time an individual is exploited by sex traffickers.

Four years ago, this Subcommittee held hearings on this very issue. Now, 4 years later, the need for a comprehensive victim-centric approach to dealing with sex trafficking of children remains. Survivors of these heinous crimes need shelter and rehabilitative services tailored to their unique needs.

Of more than 2,200 children trafficked annually in New York City, only 20 beds exist to shelter the survivors. And we need to increase funding for a national crime information center so we can improve the database on missing and exploited children.

More importantly, we need to do more to rescue these children in the first place. Since its inception more than 10 years ago, the FBI's Innocence Lost Initiative has rescued more than 3,100 child victims and initiated about 2,100 cases resulting in 1,400 convictions of sex traffickers. Now, let us put that in perspective. That is 31 children rescued over a 10-year period compared to an estimated 150,000 to 300,000 victims added every year. I commend the FBI and its partners and the U.S. Department of Justice and the Center for Missing and Exploited Children for their rescue efforts. However, this gap remains too large. I am hoping that our witness from the FBI will be able to tell us what is needed to increase the number of rescues.

Now, representatives from Craigslist testified at a previous hearing about the company's decision to remove its adult services section. At that time, we understand that the real issue was not Craigslist, but rather the issue was and still is the extent of the Internet's role in facilitating the sex trafficking of children.

What we have learned is much like drug trafficking, when one kingpin falls, another is standing in the wings waiting to take over. And such has been the case with the Internet. Craigslist removal of adult services only made it easier for other sites to facilitate sex trafficking.

Some argue that legislation would curtail or otherwise limit such websites' ability to promote these services, but we can and must

take more immediate action. We can certainly enforce the laws that are already on the books to prosecute sex traffickers and johns. We also need to improve underlying social conditions so children do not become victims in the first place. Among other things, we can do this by educating parents about the dangers of Internet predators, and we can help rescued children to get their lives back by providing them with safe housing, schooling, physical and mental health services, and, if appropriate, reuniting them with their families.

Human trafficking is the second fastest-growing criminal industry in the world, and the United States has a real opportunity to lead the way against domestic minor sex trafficking through a comprehensive victim-centric approach on the issue. Societal costs of the domestic sex trafficking industry is too great to be ignored.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The Chair now recognizes the Chair of the full Committee, the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Goodlatte.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very pleased to take part in this important hearing on the growing scourge of sex trafficking of minors in the United States. When criminals exploit children for their own financial gain or personal pleasure, they rob them of their innocence and destroy their childhood. Pimps and the adults who purchase these services, both more accurately referred to as traffickers, sexually exploit children through street prostitution and in adult strip clubs, brothels, hotel rooms, and other locations.

It goes without saying that no child should be subjected to this horrifying and inhumane violence. Sadly, it happens across the country every single day. The demand for the prostitution of children and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation of minors is steadily growing. While some traffickers are individuals working for themselves, minor sex trafficking is more often perpetrated by broader criminal syndicates or gangs that have realized it is more profitable to prostitute a child than to commit other crimes. For example, drugs can only be sold once, whereas minor children can be sold multiple times each day. Because of this growth, it is estimated that human trafficking in the United States is now a $9.8 billion industry. We must work together to put this detestable industry out of business.

We have a distinguished panel of witnesses here today to discuss this difficult subject. I hope to hear about some of the recent successes in this area. For example, just this February, the FBI worked with State and local law enforcement to arrest more than 45 traffickers in a sting operation at the Super Bowl. Even more importantly, this operation rescued 16 juveniles, some as young as 13 years old. I commend everyone involved in this endeavor.

I also hope to hear from our witnesses about what Congress and the States can do to help further combat this crime. I am particularly interested in hearing about how Federal law enforcement can better address the online facilitation of minor sex trafficking which has helped to fuel this crime in recent years. I also hope to hear about how the various States handle minor victims, including whether and why victims are often treated as criminals them-

selves, and how the States ensure that victims receive the critical services they need to move on from their trauma.

Congress has passed a number of bills to address the crisis of minor sex trafficking in the United States, but our work clearly is not done. This hearing will help us determine what more can be done to end these terrible crimes, and I thank all of you for being here today, and look forward to hearing from our witnesses. And I yield back to the Chairman.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The Chair now recognizes for an opening statement the Chairman *emeritus* of the full Committee, the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Conyers.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you, former Chairman Sensenbrenner. I just join in welcoming the witnesses, particularly Ms. Pettigrew with the Human Rights Project for Girls.

Victims, not criminals. Customers should be prosecuted. Services for victims not sufficient. We held a hearing similar to this 4 years ago, and so we are confronted with new legislation, enforcement of existing laws. And, of course, the traditional strategy is on the victims and not on the customers, and that Judge Poe of Texas has a bill that I think may help us in that regard.

There also is the aspect of many of those exploiting children have them commit other crimes involving drugs, and robbery, and other criminal activities. And so, this is a hearing that I think we can get to the bottom of this. It is great to have Judge Groman with us today, too, because she is working with us on a daily basis.

I will put the rest of my statement in the record and yield back my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Without objection. Without objection, all Members' opening statements will be put in the record.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Conyers follows:]

Prepared Statement of the Honorable John Conyers, Jr., a Representative in Congress from the State of Michigan, and Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary

Today's hearing examines the growing epidemic of minor sex trafficking, an absolutely abhorrent practice, that each year entraps more than 100,000 minors—roughly between the age 12 and 14—into prostitution or child pornography.

Although these children come from all socio-economic classes, races, and genders, they all share in common their vulnerability.

As we begin our focus on this issue, it must be recognized that these children are *victims;* they are not criminals, and they should not be treated so.

Predators seize upon the insecurities and weakness of these children, whether they are runaways and shelter youth, kids in foster care, or just "throwaways" who have been emotionally and psychologically neglected their whole lives.

As such, they are particularly vulnerable to pimps, predators, and sex traffickers through violence, coercion, and fraud.

And, when children who have fallen prey to the sex trade are treated as criminals rather than victims, this just further compounds their injuries.

They become very afraid to seek help, particularly from law enforcement because of the risk that they will be treated as criminals rather than victims.

Instead of criminalizing what these children do, we must ensure that they are recognized for what they: victims.

Second, much more needs to be done to improve how we assist these horribly exploited children.

They are physically traumatized, often being sold for 10 to 15 sex acts *per night.* One child may be raped more than 5,000 times in a *single year.*

The extent of the resultant emotional and psychological trauma they endure is hard to fathom.

These victims—in order to regain their lives—must receive specialized counseling, educational services, and housing to ensure their physical and mental rehabilitation.

Without these specialized programs, these young boys and girls often run away to return back to their abusers because of the unique trauma bonding that occurs between the victim and the trafficker.

Yet, there are far too few shelter beds available nationwide to provide for the unique needs of children crushed by the commercial sex trade.

We owe it to these youngsters and to our society to help them overcome the horrors that they have been put through.

Lastly, we must consider how technology and the Internet have enabled the minor sex trafficking business and what this industry can do to help law enforcement stop this crime.

After our last hearing on minor sex trafficking in 2010, Craigslist shut down its "adult services" section, which was a primary source of online advertising for the commercial sex trade for both adults and minors.

However, this may have been a Pyrrhic victory. Online sex trafficking has continued, but now in a more dispersed fashion.

For example, Backpage.com has roughly 70% of the market share of Internet advertising for the sex trade.

It is critical that effective ways for law enforcement to collaborate with these companies be developed so that the perpetrators of these heinous crimes are ultimately brought to justice.

We must also consider how to rein in the use of decentralized advertising and foreign-based entities that increasingly disseminate this advertising.

And, we must also explore how to better educate minors to avoid online predators. More than ever, pimps and traffickers are using social networking sites to coerce and cajole vulnerable children into the sex trade by preying on their insecurities.

To conclude, I hope that this will be the beginning of a larger discussion that will include human trafficking and labor trafficking.

For now, however, I am sure that we can come together in a bipartisan manner to address the evils of juvenile sex trafficking and to find ways that will improve the lives of the far too many children who have already been exploited.

We have addressed similar issues in the past, and we should look to such legislation for guidance. For instance, we should consider effectuating a national standard of care for victims of juvenile sex trafficking, just as past Congresses have for victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault, to ensure that the these youths receive proper care.

Portions of Mr. Poe's bill will also serve this cause well, as it recognizes the need to greatly improve services to children affected by the scourge of sex trafficking by setting up a revenue neutral fund to provide them aid and creates block grants for sex trafficking deterrence.

We should also take steps to curb demand by assisting state and local agencies enforce laws that are already on the books when it comes to dealing with "johns" who patronize minors, as this is a key component in fighting the exploitation of minors. However, we must be careful in creating new federal laws and mandatory minimums in this area, as new federal mandatory minimums for "johns" may lead to unintended consequences.

Tomorrow, the Task Force on Over-Criminalization will be holding a hearing on the over-federalization of criminal laws, and this is just such an instance where state laws that are in place may be just as, or even more effective, in combating demand when they are enforced than a new federal mandatory minimum.

I know that we can work together to bring an end to the evils of juvenile sex trafficking, and I look forward to hearing the testimony of our witnesses.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. And without objection, the Chair will be authorized to declare recesses of the Subcommittee during votes in the House.

It is now my pleasure to introduce our witnesses today. Mr. Michael Harpster is the acting deputy assistant director for Criminal Investigation Division Branch 1 of the FBI. In this position, Mr. Harpster leads one of the largest and most active branches in the FBI, which includes crimes against children, the transnational organized crime east and west sections, and the violent criminal threat section.

Prior to being appointed as acting deputy assistant director, Mr. Harpster worked at FBI headquarters as section chief of the Vio-

lent Crimes Against Children Section. He has had program management responsibility for 69 child exploitation task forces, and all matters related to crimes against children in all of the FBI field offices.

He earned his bachelor of science degree in criminal justice and his master's degree in public administration from Northeastern University.

Ms. Withelma T. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew is a second-year student at Trinity Washington University. She currently serves on the National Foster Care Youth and Alumni Policy Council and is a member of the board of directors for the Human Rights Project for Girls. From the ages of 10 to 17, Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew survived being subjected to criminal sexual exploitation in the United States. She now uses her experience to teach, lead, and educate on needed reforms to address minor sex trafficking, including in the child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health systems.

She is a daily mentor to other young people who have similarly been forced into this modern day form of slavery. In 2013, Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew was listed as one of Time magazine's 30 people under 30 changing the world. She has lectured at many venues, and has shared her story at a national level as one of Glamour magazine's 2011 women of the year. Most recently, she has trained law enforcement in conjunction with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and has contributed in the launch of the U.S. Senate Caucus to Combat Human Trafficking.

Corporal Chris Heid is a corporal with the Maryland State Police, who has been assigned to the Child Recovery Unit for the last 3 years. This unit investigates critically missing children, issues amber alerts, and investigates human trafficking primarily as it relates to juveniles. He is also a member of the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force. He has been a member of the Maryland State Police for 20 years and has held a variety of assignments, including road patrol and other investigative positions. He is based out of Columbia, Maryland.

The Honorable Donna Quigley Groman is the supervising judge of the Kenyon Juvenile Justice Center for the Los Angeles County Juvenile Delinquency Court. She has served as a lawyer and a judge in the field of juvenile law for approximately 28 years.

Judge Groman is active in judicial education and serves as faculty to the Center for Judicial Education and Research in California, teaching juvenile delinquency law and related topics through judges statewide. She has worked on issues related to domestic minor sex trafficking, successful re-entry from probation facilities, reducing the school to prison pipeline, and school discipline.

She earned her bachelor's degree in economics from SUNY-Stony Brook and her juris doctorate from the American University Washington College of Law.

The witnesses' written testimony will be entered in the record in its entirety without objection. I ask that the witnesses summarize his or her testimony in 5 minutes or less. You will see the green, yellow, and red lights in front of you. I think you all know what they mean.

So I would like to recognize Mr. Harpster first. Mr. Harpster, the floor is yours.

TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL T. HARPSTER, ACTING DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION, BRANCH 1, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Mr. HARPSTER. Good morning, Chairman Sensenbrenner, Ranking Member Scott, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. I am pleased to be here with you today to discuss the Federal Bureau of Investigation's efforts to combat child sex trafficking.

It is nearly unthinkable, but every year thousands of children become victims of crime, whether it be sexual exploitation by prostitution on the Internet, or kidnapping, violent acts, and sexual abuse. Over the last several years, the FBI, State and local law enforcement, and the public have become more informed about the methods used to exploit children, and the vulnerabilities the perpetrators seek out. More incidents of these crimes are being reported than ever before, and technology has greatly improved law enforcement's ability to identify those who exploit our children.

Between 1996 and December 2013, the number of child exploitation cases opened throughout the FBI increased substantially from just over 100 to more than 7,000. To combat this threat, the FBI's Violent Crimes Against Children Program utilizes a victim-centered and intelligence driven investigative model.

Our strategy involves using multidisciplinary teams to investigate and prosecute crimes that cross legal, geographical, and jurisdictional boundaries. Through the FBI's 69 child exploitation task forces, task force members employ strong partnerships between law enforcement, social service agencies, and non-profit organizations in order to gather the local intelligence needed to identify national level enterprises responsible for the exploitation of child victims.

This year marks the 11th anniversary of the FBI's most prominent initiative established to address sex trafficking of children within the United States. Through the Innocence Lost National Initiative, the FBI, working with nearly 400 partner agencies, designs enforcement operations specifically to identify and recover child victims. To date, these operations have resulted in over 2,100 cases, 1,400 convictions, and the recovery of 3,100 children.

These victims come from all socioeconomic backgrounds and are often targeted because of individual vulnerabilities. In some cases, these vulnerabilities are not easily apparent to others. In many cases, though, victims live within an abusive or troubled family dynamic. Some come from families with very limited resources, are runaways, or are foster youth, or those within the juvenile justice system. In the hands of their traffickers, these individuals will be subject to numerous sexual assaults and continued abuse.

It is important to note the FBI does more than investigate those who exploit victims of trafficking. The FBI's Office for Victim Assistance along with victim specialists from the United States attorney's offices and other non-government victim assistance service providers are involved in all stages of the coordination and execution of our enforcement operation in an effort to address the immediate and long-term needs of these victims.

In addition to our domestic operations, the FBI coordinates the Violent Crimes Against Children International Task Force. It is a select cadre of international law enforcement experts working to-

gether to formulate and deliver a dynamic global response to incidents of child exploitation through the establishment and furtherance of strategic partnerships, the aggressive engagement of relevant law enforcement, and the extensive use of liaison operational support and coordination.

Through this task force, we are working closely with our global partners to reduce the vulnerability of children to acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, which are facilitated through the use of computers, identify and rescue child victims, investigate and prosecute sexual predators who use the Internet and other online services to sexually exploit children, regardless of their geographical location.

The FBI's effort to combat child sex trafficking represents a multi-faceted approach to a multi-faceted problem. As a result, our efforts span from investigation to prosecution and are supplemented by an array of investigative training, outreach, and victim services carried out by a wide range of components. Simply put, we are proud of the work we do in this area and look forward to continuing to have a leading role in the government-wide fight against child sex trafficking.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I will now be happy to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Harpster follows:]

Department of Justice

STATEMENT OF

MICHAEL T. HARPSTER
ACTING DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM, HOMELAND SECURITY, AND INVESTIGATIONS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AT A HEARING ENTITLED

"INNOCENCE FOR SALE: DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING"

PRESENTED
MARCH 26, 2014

Michael T. Harpster
Acting Deputy Assistant Director
Criminal Investigative Division
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Statement Before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations
Washington, D.C.
March 26, 2014

Good morning Chairman Sensenbrenner, Ranking Member Scott, Vice Chairman Gohmert, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to be here with you today to discuss the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) efforts to combat child sex trafficking.

It's nearly unthinkable, but every year thousands of children become victims of crime—whether it's through kidnappings, violent attacks, sexual abuse, or online predators.

While victims come from all socioeconomic backgrounds, they are often targeted because of individual vulnerabilities. Many have already experienced abusive or troubled families, have disabilities, come from families with very limited resources, have run away, are involved in the juvenile justice, dependency or foster care systems, or are estranged from protective networks because of their LGBT identity. In the hands of their abusers, these individuals will be subjected to numerous sexual assaults and continued abuse, including sex trafficking.

Over the last several years, the FBI, state and local law enforcement, and the public have developed a deeper understanding of the ways in which children are being victimized. More incidents of child exploitation involving a connection to online activity are being identified for investigation than ever before. Between fiscal years 1996 and 2007, the number of cases opened throughout the FBI dramatically increased from just over 100 to more than 2,000. From 2007 to the present, the numbers have steadily continued to rise. In December 2013, the FBI had over 7,000 pending investigations involving child exploitation, including sex trafficking of minors and child pornography.

To combat this threat, the FBI utilizes an intelligence-based threat driven approach and the expertise of those in its Violent Crimes Against Children (VCAC) program. The mission of the VCAC is to provide a rapid, proactive, and comprehensive response to counter all threats of abuse and exploitation of children when those crimes fall under the jurisdiction and authority of the FBI; to identify and rescue child victims; to reduce the vulnerability of children to in-person and online sexual exploitation and abuse; and to strengthen the capabilities of the FBI and federal, state, local, tribal, and international law enforcement partners through training, intelligence sharing, technical support, and investigative assistance.

Our strategy involves using multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams to investigate and prosecute crimes that cross, geographical, and jurisdictional boundaries; promoting and

enhancing interagency sharing of intelligence, specialized skills, and services; and widely offering our victim/witness services. All for the express purpose of protecting our nation's greatest asset—our children.

Historical Overview of the FBI's Response to Child Sexual Exploitation

While investigating the disappearance of a juvenile in May 1993, FBI special agents from the Baltimore Field Office and detectives from the Prince George's County (Maryland) Police Department identified two suspects who had sexually exploited numerous juveniles over a 25-year period. An investigation into these activities revealed that adults were routinely using computers to transmit sexually explicit images of minors and, in some instances, to lure minors into engaging in illicit sexual activity. Further investigation and discussions with experts, both within the FBI and in the private sector, revealed that the use of computer telecommunications was rapidly becoming one of the most prevalent techniques by which some sex offenders shared pornographic images of minors and identified and recruited children into sexual relationships. In 1995, based on information developed during this investigation, the Innocent Images National Initiative—initially part of our Cyber Division—was created to address this type of criminal activity conducted by users of commercial and private online services and the Internet.

In 2000, the Crimes Against Children program was formed by our Violent Crimes Section—part of the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division. It was under this umbrella that programs such as the Innocence Lost National Initiative and Child Abduction Rapid Deployment Teams were implemented to provide additional resources and response tools to combat the ever-present problems of child sex trafficking, child abduction, and child sex tourism.

In October 2012, the Crimes Against Children program and the Innocent Images National Initiative merged to form the Violent Crimes Against Children program in the Criminal Investigative Division. The program continues the efforts of both former iterations, providing centralized coordination and analysis of case information that is national and international in scope, requiring close cooperation not only among FBI field offices and legal attachés but also with state, local, tribal, and foreign governments.

In many instances, successful sex trafficking investigations are the result of FBI's federal, state, and local task force partners using traditional techniques on the street. In other cases, we have agents and officers actively working online undercover, examining and utilizing websites where pimps are advertising child victims. We also receive and investigate tips from the public, as well as from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, a Department of Health and Human Services hotline, administered under grant by the Polaris Project.

In addition to its state and local partnerships, the FBI also coordinates the Violent Crimes Against Children International Task Force—a select cadre of international law

enforcement experts working together to formulate and deliver a dynamic global response to crimes against children through the establishment and development of strategic partnerships, the vigorous engagement of relevant law enforcement, and the extensive use of liaison, operational support, and coordination to facilitate multi-lateral cooperation.

Innocence Lost National Initiative

This year marks the 11th anniversary of the FBI's most prominent initiative to combat the problem of sex trafficking of children within the United States. In June of 2003, the FBI and the Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) joined NCMEC to launch the Innocence Lost National Initiative (ILNI). While it is difficult to imagine, we have seen children as young as 11 years-old targeted for sex trafficking in the United States. Once under the control of a pimp, escape is often difficult because the captor often tightly controls access to money or responds to attempted escapes with brutal violence.

Through ILNI, the FBI and its partners execute Operation Cross Country—a nationwide enforcement action focusing on victims of child sex trafficking. Our most recent operation in July 2013—our seventh and largest such operation—concluded with the recovery of 106 commercially sexually exploited children and the arrests of 151 pimps and other individuals.

This most recent operation took place in 76 cities and was carried out by the FBI in partnership with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies and NCMEC. Over 1,300 law enforcement officers across the country have been trained, in preparation for these operations, through the Protecting Victims of Child Prostitution Course, in partnership with NCMEC.

Task force operations can begin as local actions, targeting such places as truck stops, casinos, street "tracks," hotels, and Internet websites, based on intelligence gathered by officers working in their respective jurisdictions.

By utilizing information obtained through these operations and by building a strong rapport with victims, the FBI often uncovers organized efforts to prostitute women and children across many states. These investigations can lead to local, state, or federal charges. To date, our investigations have led to the conviction of more than 1,400 pimps, madams, and their associates who commercially exploit children through prostitution. These convictions have resulted in lengthy sentences, including multiple life sentences and the seizure of real property, vehicles, and monetary assets.

The FBI has developed special teams and protocols for prevention and enforcement actions surrounding large-scale sporting events and other events of national interest. Large-scale events also present significant opportunities for those who would exploit our children. It is important to note, this is not a problem associated with an individual event. Trafficking criminal enterprises travel across states to go to these events and the FBI and its partners are there, prepared to rescue our children and bring their traffickers to justice.

In our most successful special event coordination, sixteen girls were rescued at the 2014 Super Bowl in an FBI-led operation targeting commercial child sex trafficking; 48 suspected pimps and their associates were arrested.

It is important to note that the Bureau does more than investigate those who exploit victims of trafficking. The FBI's Office for Victim Assistance, victim specialists from the U.S. Attorneys' Offices, and other non-governmental victim assistance service providers are involved in all stages of the coordination and execution of these events in an effort to address the many challenges facing each victim.

Often with histories of poverty, homelessness, and exposure to violence and abuse, victims may have difficulties reaching out for help or determining who they can trust. Juveniles who get caught up in sex trafficking face myriad obstacles and enormous needs—including very basic needs such as safe housing, subsistence, and schooling—if they are able to leave that life. In addition, they may need substance abuse treatment, medical treatment, and mental health services. Many face impediments to reuniting with their family of origin, so they may need help to prepare for independent living. Our victim services teams advise them of their rights and ensure they get the help they need to address their short-term and long-term needs—such as legal and repatriation services, immigration relief, housing, employment, education, job training, and child care. Nearly 400 victims have been provided services as a result of Operation Cross Country to date.

Child Sex Tourism Initiative

Since 2008, the FBI's Child Sex Tourism Initiative has employed proactive strategies to identify U.S. citizens who travel overseas to engage in commercial and non-commercial sexual conduct with children. These strategies also include a multi-disciplinary approach through partnerships with foreign law enforcement and non-governmental organizations to provide child victims with available support services. In 2013, these efforts continued with successful prosecutions for illegal activities occurring in various locations throughout the world.

For example, on December 4, 2013, John Ott was sentenced to 20 years in federal prison, followed by lifetime supervised release, for engaging in sexual conduct with a child. Between 2004 and 2005, Ott traveled to Kenya and began working as a medical doctor at a non-governmental organization. During this period, Ott was suspected of sexually abusing boys who were approximately 11 to 13 years of age and provided them with money and other goods. Upon returning to the U.S. in 2009, Ott joined an organization located in New Mexico which provided an opportunity for him to travel to South America. In July 2011, Ott returned to Kenya where he began working as a medical doctor at a local hospital. On December 10, 2012, Ott was arrested in Tanzania and subsequently charged in the United States. To date, approximately 29 child victims have been identified as being sexually abused by Ott.

Public Outreach

The FBI-SOS program is a nationwide initiative designed to educate children about the dangers they face on the Internet and to help prevent crimes against children. It promotes cyber citizenship among students by engaging them in a fun, age-appropriate, competitive online program where they learn how to safely and responsibly use the Internet. The program emphasizes the importance of cyber safety topics such as password security, smart surfing habits, and the safeguarding of personal information.

Since 2007, the FBI and Clear Channel have worked together to form a partnership that would take advantage of the new digital outdoor networks ability to react to local conditions quickly and inform the public of important community information. The FBI has already apprehended dozens of criminals as a direct result of these digital out-of-home "Wanted" messages in the past four years. With instantaneous alerts, digital billboards are one of the most effective means for public service communications and in providing emergency messaging of many types.

Conclusion

The FBI employs a multi-faceted approach to combat the complex problem of child sex trafficking. As a result, our efforts span from investigation to prosecution, and are supplemented by an array of investigative, training, outreach, and victim services carried out by a wide range of components. Simply put, we are proud of the work we do in this area, and look forward to continuing to have a leading role in the government-wide fight against child sex trafficking.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I am now happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Thank you very much, Mr. Harpster.
Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew?

TESTIMONY OF WITHELMA "T" ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW, HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT FOR GIRLS

Ms. ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW. I want to say thank you so much, Chairman, and to the Subcommittee and the members of the audience for allowing me to be here today.

Suffering, isolated, helpless and tired, at the age of 15, the concrete box that represented myself in Zenoff Hall, the largest juvenile facility in Las Vegas, Nevada seemed no less invasive than the horror of the streets. As much of a real physical confinement that it was, it was not all too different than the mental confinement that I endured from my pimp. I was interrogated for hours on end, reminded that my opinions did not matter, and locked in like a dog in a kennel. Unless I was saying the answers to the questions that they wanted to hear, my voice was irrelevant. Skip ahead a few years later, I spent my 17th birthday within the juvenile walls in the State of California.

Both times I was faced with charges of solicitation and/or prostitution, a crime that as a minor who was not of legal age to consent to sex, could not seriously be charged to commit. But yet, there I was facing them. I comprehended this as yet another system that failed me. This became familiar as I was raised experiencing most of my life in the foster care system, which is where I learned to accept and normalized being used as an object of financial gain by people who were supposed to love and care for me, got used to various people controlling my life, and lacked opportunities to gain meaningful relationships and attachments. No one cared and no paid much attention, so I was considered a problem child with multiple moves and histories of sexual abuse.

At the age of 10 years old, after enduring multiple years of various types of abuse within the system, my vulnerabilities made me a target for a devious man, my exploiter, trafficker, or otherwise known as pimp, to sexually exploit me starting on the streets, then the Internet, and ultimately anywhere. After being repeatedly beaten, tortured, and manipulated, I became more afraid of him than any other human being on this planet. So any time I came in contact with law enforcement, I knew I had to protect him to protect myself. Plus, every time I encountered law enforcement, I was treated like I was the criminal.

While in detention, I was so hurt and baffled that I was the one who was locked up. It seemed like they always wanted to detain me and my pimp, both people of color, instead of focusing on the buyers who were adults and primarily White. No one seemed to care about them. It hurt that even when I released, I knew the cycle would continue because buyers were always going to get what they wanted, and they would get to walk away. Some of them would even pay more knowing I was an adolescent.

I endured years of sexual trauma and humiliation from all points, including the buyers and johns. And then I was re-traumatized every day in detention while having to be watched naked while I showered. No one ever assessed me or even asked me what

got me there, and there were no rehabilitation services offered. I just sat locked in a box being interrogated and talked down to.

Many of the young people I mentor and have advocated on behalf of have dealt with situations like the one I have expressed. Many have transitioned between and intersected throughout systems, primarily the child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice systems. One young survivor explained to me in her words, "I don't feel good about any time I came in contact with law enforcement." She echoes, "They treated me like a criminal and used their authority and superiority to look down upon me. The way they talked about me was degrading, as if they felt that they were so much better, and they didn't even know my situation."

She tells me about the first day that she went on lockdown. "They wanted me to cut my hair, and that was the one thing that my pimp did let me have." She said, "I hated the way the staff treated and talked to me, like I was a penitentiary prisoner when I was just this teenager." She goes on to say that "I was 16. I should've been checked in by a nurse counselor, offered some type of wraparound services. Instead, little to no services were provided to me."

Both these stories express how attention has been spent detaining young victims. Yes, necessary advancements have been made nationwide, especially in criminalizing traffickers and pimps, but there is so much more to be done in regard to fighting demand and providing alternative gender-specific and trauma informed services to children rather than detention.

Detention just does not equal prevention. If we continue to lock up victims as we are now, they will not get services that they need. Rather than detention, we should be trying to meaningfully engage the young person in self-exploration activities that promote healthy self-esteem. Locking up victims does not help or prevent them from being exploited.

But if for some reason a victim is detained, it should be ensured that they receive trauma-informed therapeutic services through counseling and other means while they are in custody, or preferably through a community-based program. Alternatives to detention for these youth should be instituted.

Then later, after care programs, separate from probation, should be instituted that are non-incriminating and strength based to assist with educational, vocational, and self-exploration needs. Giving them opportunity to self-explore gives them power and healthy self-esteem, which is necessary in helping survivors rebuild their lives.

In addition, organizations and governing bodies serving this population should at minimum have one survivor on staff to help navigate and advise on effective practices. By expanding and providing access to programs like the Family Justice Center, alternative facilities can house survivor advocates who can be present from the initial point of contact with the victim.

And that is why bills like the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act are so important because it not only provides alternatives to detention and trauma-informed services for youth, but it finally goes after the buyers of child sex.

Importantly, more must be done to focus on the root cause of the issue, that people are buying children for sexual purposes. This is

not prostitution, and it should never be referred to as such. This is child rape, and those who purchase these children for sex should be viewed and punished as child rapists. Buyers should not get away with it as they do every day as of now. Just as it is expressed that it not okay to sell children in our country, we need to make it clear that it is not okay to buy them either.

It is my hope today that the Federal Government can acknowledge your influential role in helping to end the demand for sex with minors by prioritizing and aiding investigation and prosecution of buyers, and to help ensure that survivors are getting more access to the services that they desperately need.

I would like to thank the Human Rights Project for Girls, the Subcommittee, and the audience for taking the time to receive my contributions. And thank you to all who work on behalf of our Nation's most vulnerable children.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew follows:]

United States House of Representatives

Committee on Judiciary

Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations

Hearing: Innocence for Sale: Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

March 26th, 2014

Witness: Withelma "T" Ortiz Walker Pettigrew

Human Rights Project for Girls

Suffering, isolated, tired and helpless at the age of 15, the concrete box that represented my cell in Zenoff hall, the girls section -the largest of the juvenile facility in Las Vegas, Nevada, seemed no less invasive than the horror of the streets. As much of a real physical confinement It was, it wasn't all too different than the mental confinement I endured from my pimp. I was interrogated for hours on end, reminded that my opinions didn't matter and locked in, like a dog in a kennel. Unless I was saying the answers to the questions that they wanted to hear, My Voice was irrelevant. Skip ahead a few years later, I endured it again in California, only that time experiencing my 17 birthday within the juvenile walls. Both times I was faced with Charges of Solicitation and/or Prostitution, a crime that as a minor who wasn't of legal age to consent to sex, couldn't seriously be charged to commit. But Yet, There I was, facing them. To my agony, I comprehended this as yet another system that failed me. This was familiar, as I was raised experiencing most of my life in the foster care system, which is where I learned to accept and normalize being used as an object of financial gain by people who were supposed to care for me, got used to various people controlling my life, and lacked opportunities to gain meaningful relationships and attachments. No one cared and No one Payed Much Attention. I was considered a "problem child" with a history of multiple moves and sexual abuse. At the age of 10 years old, after enduring multiple years of sexual, physical,emotional, and verbal abuse within the system, my vulnerabilities made me a target for a devious man, my exploiter, otherwise known as my pimp, who was almost twice my age, to sexually exploit me starting on the streets, the internet, and ultimately anywhere including strip clubs, massage parlors, and local papers. After being repeatedly beaten, tortured and manipulated I became more afraid of him than any other human being on this planet. So, anytime I came in contact with law enforcement I knew I had to protect him to protect myself. Plus, every time I encountered law enforcement I was treated like a criminal.

While in Detention, I was so hurt that I was the one who was locked up. It seemed like they always wanted to detain me and my pimp, both people of color, instead of focusing on the buyers who were adults--and primarily white--no one seemed to care about them! It hurt that even when I was released, I knew this cycle would continue because buyers were always going to get what they wanted and get to walk away. Some of them would even pay more knowing I was an adolescent. I endured years of sexual trauma and humiliation from the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, my exploiter, and the buyers-known as "johns", "tricks", etc. I was retraumatized everyday in detention while having to be watched, fully nude, while I showered. No one assessed me or ever even asked me what got me there, no rehabilitation services were offered. I Just sat locked in a box, while being interrogated and talked down to. Many of the young people I have mentored and advocated on behalf of have dealt with situations like the one I've expressed. Far too many have transitioned between and intersected throughout systems primarily the Child welfare, Mental Health, and Juvenile Justice Systems. One young survivor of Domestic Child Sex Trafficking explained to me in her words " I don't feel good about anytime I came in contact with law enforcement" She echoes "they treated me like a criminal, and used their authority and superiority to look down upon me." "The way they talked about me was degrading, they felt as if they were so much better than me and they didn't even know my situation." She tells me about the first day she was on lockdown: "They wanted me to cut my hair out, the one thing my pimp did let me have." She said "I hate the way the staff treated and talked to me, like I was a penitentiary prisoner, when I was just a teenager." She goes on to say, "I was 16, I should of been checked in by a nurse, counselor, offered some type of wraparound services, instead little to no services were provided to me." Both these stories, my own as well as the young survivor's, express how attention has been spent detaining young victims. We have made necessary advancements nationwide, especially in

criminalizing traffickers and pimps, but there is so much to be done in regards to fighting demand and providing alternative gender specific, and trauma informed services to children rather than detention.

Detention does not equal prevention. If we continue to lock up victims, as we are now, they will not get the services they need. Rather than detention, We should be trying to meaningfully engage the young person in self exploration activities that promote healthy self esteem. Locking up victims does not help or prevent them from being exploited. If for some reason a victim is detained, it should be ensured that they receive trauma-informed therapeutic services, through counseling and other means, while they are in custody or preferably through a community based program. Alternatives to detention for these youth should be instituted. Then later, after-care programs separate from probation should be instituted, that are non-incriminating and strength based to assist with educational,vocational, and self exploration needs. Giving them opportunities to self explore gives them power and healthy self esteem which is necessary in helping survivors rebuild their lives. In addition, organizations and governing bodies serving this population should at minimum have one survivor on staff to help navigate and advise on effective practices. By expanding and providing access to programs like Family Justice Centers, alternative facilities that can house survivor advocates who can be present from the initial point of contact with a victim.

And that is also why bills like the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act are so important. Because it not only provides alternatives to detention and trauma informed services for youth, but finally goes after buyers of child sex.

Importantly, more must be done to focus on the root cause of the issue- that people are buying children for sexual purposes. This is not prostitution -- this is child rape. And those who purchase these children for sex should be viewed and punished as child rapists. Buyers should not get away with it, but

as of now they do everyday. Just as it is expressed that it is not ok to sell children in our country- we need to make clear that it is not ok to buy them either.

It is my hope today, that the federal government can acknowledge its influential role in helping to end the demand for sex with minors by prioritizing and aiding in the investigation and prosecution of buyers-- and to help ensure that survivors are getting more access to the services they desperately need. I would like to Thank the Human Rights Project for Girls, the Committee, and the audience for taking the time to receive my contributions. And thank you to all who work on behalf of our nation's most vulnerable children.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Thank you.
Corporal Heid?

TESTIMONY OF CHRISTOPHER HEID, CORPORAL, CHILD RECOVERY UNIT, MARYLAND STATE POLICE

Mr. HEID. Good morning. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I would just like to say on behalf of the Maryland State Police what an honor it is to be here before you today. I would also like to say thank you to Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew for being here to share her story as a survivor.

The Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit's primary responsibility is missing and abducted children. One of the missions is to assist local, State, and Federal agencies with the most critical cases or with a nexus to Maryland. Our unit works closely with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to post information about missing children and actively investigates cases of missing and exploited children.

Since 2011, our unit has taken a more active role in human trafficking investigations in the State. Unlike most vice units, our unit focuses all of our attention on locating juvenile victims of human trafficking. The two troopers that are in the unit are part of the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force, and the task force provides an integral part in the investigation by providing us with additional funding and manpower.

Our unit treats every girl as a victim. Our unit is not interested in arresting the girls in prostitution. The goals of our unit is to locate juvenile victims, offer assistance to adult victims, and to arrest and prosecute the traffickers and pimps.

Our unit works hard at building and maintaining a working relationship with the local non-government organizations that provide resources to victims of human trafficking. The unit has found that these resources provide valuable assets, most importantly to the victim, but also by being an advocate for the victims and their families. There are times when the Child Recovery Unit has reached out to these groups to locate placement for homeless children or children who might need placement for just a period of time.

Additionally, our unit has worked with the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice and the local non-government organization, Turnaround, to identify possible victims of juvenile sex trafficking. This is accomplished by screening children within our local juvenile detention facilities.

Victim service is a fundamental part of our unit. Once a child victim is located, we work hard to establish and build a rapport with those victims. Whether it is having lunch with a child in placement or making a phone call to another victim, our unit tries hard to maintain contact with all victims, especially throughout the judicial process. The unit has also had success in keeping contact with adult victims who have come forward on occasion and provided information on additional victims or traffickers down the line that we were able to follow up on.

Since 2011, our unit, with the assistance of the FBI Task Force, has made contact with over 300 girls involved in prostitution. These contacts resulted in children being rescued, victims getting

assistance, and traffickers being arrested. In 2013 alone, our unit made contact with 184 girls, of which 11 were juveniles.

When conducting human trafficking investigations, it is essential to cooperate with outside organizations. Our unit receives assistance from Backpage.com, which is primarily the main area that these girls are posting ads. Backpage actually is very cooperative with us in providing quick responses to subpoenas, and they do act immediately to assist us with juvenile human trafficking investigations.

While speaking with traffickers in Maryland, it is apparent that there is a concern in their world of this task force. It has been said by several traffickers that they are careful to not use juveniles because of the stiff Federal penalties that apply. With that being said, the penalties for trafficking of adults are not as severe. While we are making significant strides in Maryland, there is still so much more than can be done.

A need in Maryland, and presumably nationwide, is for more training for the initial responders to missing child cases and human trafficking or prostitution investigations. A good amount of our missing child cases end as a recovery at a hotel. There are various clues that can be found that point to human trafficking that probably are not very obvious to the responding officer. As human trafficking cases increase, so, too, should training to identify these trends.

In the 3 plus years that the Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit has been investigating human trafficking cases, we have come a long way, but clearly there is still much further to go. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Heid follows:]

Christopher Heid

Corporal

Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit

March 26, 2014

House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism,
Homeland Security and Investigations Hearing on minor sex trafficking

The Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit's primary responsibility is missing and abducted children. One of the missions is to assist local, state, and federal agencies with the most critical cases in Maryland or with a nexus to Maryland. In an effort to raise public awareness the Child Recovery Unit manages the Amber Alert Program. The unit works with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to post information about missing children and actively investigates cases of missing and exploited children.

Since 2011, the Child Recovery Unit has taken a more active role in Human Trafficking Investigations in the state. Unlike most vice units, the Child Recovery Unit focuses all of their attention on locating juvenile victims of Human Trafficking. The two troopers in the unit are part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Maryland Child Exploitation Task Force. The Task Force provides an integral part in the investigations by providing additional funding and manpower to the troopers.

The Child Recovery Unit treats every girl met as a victim. The unit is not interested in arresting the girls they encounter in prostitution. The goals of the Unit are to locate juvenile victims, offer assistance to adult victims, and arrest and prosecute the traffickers and pimps.

The Child Recovery Unit works hard at building and maintaining a working relationship with the local non-government organizations that provide resources to victims of Human Trafficking. The unit has found that these resources provide valuable assets most importantly to the victim but also by being an advocate for the victim and their families. There are times when the Child Recovery Unit has reached out to these groups to locate placement for homeless children or children who need placement for a period of time. Additionally, the unit has worked with the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice and local non-government organization Turnaround, to identify possible victims of juvenile sex trafficking. This is accomplished by screening children within the local juvenile detention facilities.

Victim service is a fundamental part of the Child Recovery Unit. Once a child victim is located, the troopers work hard to establish and build a rapport with the victims. Whether it is having lunch with a child in placement or making a phone call to another victim, the unit tries to maintain contact with all victims especially throughout the judicial process. The unit has also had success in keeping contact with adult victims who can provide information on additional victims or traffickers down the line.

Since 2011, the Child Recovery Unit with the assistance of the Task Force has made contact with over 300 girls involved in prostitution. These contacts resulted in children being rescued, victims getting assistance, and traffickers being arrested. In 2013, the unit made contact with 184 girls of which 11 were juveniles.

When conducting Human Trafficking Investigations it is essential to cooperate with outside organizations. The Child Recovery Unit receives assistance from backpage.com in regards to the posted online prostitution ads. Backpage.com is the primary posting method for the girls that are contacted by the Unit. Backpage.com provides quick responses to subpoenas and acts immediately to assist with juvenile human trafficking investigations.

While speaking with traffickers in Maryland, it is apparent that there is a concern in their world of the Task Force. It has been said by several traffickers that they are careful to not use juveniles because of the stiff federal penalties that apply. With that being said, the penalties for trafficking adults are not as severe. While we are making significant strides in Maryland, there is still so much more that can be done.

A need in Maryland and presumably nationwide is for more training for the initial responders to missing child cases and human trafficking/prostitution investigations. A good amount of our missing child cases end as a recovery at a hotel. There are various clues that can be found that point to Human Trafficking that aren't very obvious to the responding officer. As Human Trafficking cases increase, so too should training to identify these trends.

In the three plus years that the Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit has been investigating Human Trafficking cases, we have come a long way but there is still a long way to go.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Thank you, Corporal.
Judge Groman?

TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE DONNA QUIGLEY GROMAN, SUPERVISING JUDGE, KENYON JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER, LOS ANGELES COUNTY JUVENILE DELINQUENCY COURT

Judge GROMAN. Good morning, Chairman Sensenbrenner, Ranking Member Conyers, Ranking Member Scott, Committee and Subcommittee Members. Thank you for inviting me to testify today. My name is Donna Quigley Groman, and I am the site judge for the Compton Juvenile Delinquency Court in the County of Los Angeles. I am here today on behalf of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, which is one of the Nation's oldest and largest judicial membership organizations serving judges and other professionals in the juvenile and family justice system.

Our juvenile court system is confronted by the crisis of domestic sex trafficking. I have been working on this issue locally and nationally since 2010, and have assisted in creating Los Angeles County's collaborative court, the STAR court, which is a court dedicated to youth charged with prostitution related crimes.

The children arrested for prostitution related offenses have come via several paths. They may have been coerced or lured by gangs. They may have run away from abusive foster care placements or were recruited from group homes and coerced into sexual exploitation. Some may be lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender youth who have fled unaccepting homes or have been thrown out of unaccepting homes. Some are trafficked by a family member or enter into a relationship with a pimp because of challenges encountered in their own homes. What many of these youth have in common is a history of child sexual abuse, early childhood trauma, and involvement in the child welfare system.

These youth are not criminals. They are children who are being abused by sex traffickers. They deserve the same protections and resources to which child victims of sexual or child victims of physical abuse or neglect are entitled.

Child victims of sexual abuse are comforted by assurances that they are not responsible for the abuse. Child victims of commercial sexual exploitation deserve the same assurances. The criminalization of commercial exploitation of children holds these children responsible for not preventing their exploitation. Our society should not punish these young victims of crime who as children are legally incapable of consenting to sex acts. These children are desperately in need of safe housing, food, clothing, other basic necessities, counseling, medical care, mental health services, and to be reconnected with education.

Traffickers are known to specifically target vulnerable foster youth. Approximately 1.6 million children run away from home every year in the United States. These children are at risk of child sexual exploitation due to their mental, physical, and financial vulnerability. Moreover, trafficking takes a disproportionately heavier toll on minority youth.

In 39 States across this Nation, youth who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation face criminal charges. The dangers of incarceration, which include exposure to criminally sophisticated

youth, the attachment of the stigma of being labeled a criminal, potential sexual and physical abuse while in custody, are cruel responses to a social problem. The mere exposure to the juvenile justice system leads to poor educational outcomes, including dropout and a much higher chance of leading a criminal lifestyle as an adult.

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court judges opposes the criminalization of victims of child sexual exploitation and supports development and implementation of humane and appropriate laws and policies that are in line with the Federal definition of a child victim of human trafficking. The National Council promotes the development of specialized services and resources for child victims, including the development of non-detention triage facilities and specialized placement options which are equipped to effectively address the unique trauma suffered by victims of child trafficking.

The National Council is further dedicated to promoting the exercise of judicial leadership to convene local stakeholder and community groups in an effort to improve and enhance system responses to the needs of child victims of sex trafficking. The National Council is developing a curriculum for juvenile and family courts and will make this training accessible to judges around the country.

Judicial education is underfunded and legislation that includes funding should consider judicial education as a purpose area in order to make change happen around the country.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Judge Groman follows:]

House Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations
Hearing on: Innocence for Sale: Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking
March 26, 2014

Witness Testimony for
The Honorable Donna Quigley Groman
Supervising Judge, Kenyon Juvenile Justice Center
Los Angeles County Juvenile Delinquency Court

Good morning, Chairman Goodlatte, Ranking Member Conyers, Chairman Sensenbrenner, Ranking Member Scott, and Committee and Subcommittee Members.

Thank you for inviting me to testify today. My name is Donna Quigley Groman and I am the Site Judge for the Compton Juvenile Delinquency Court in the County of Los Angeles. Our juvenile court system is confronted by the crisis of domestic sex trafficking. My job is to ensure that the court system has the capacity to address this issue through training, technical assistance, and the development of resources. I have been working on this issue since 2010, serving as the chair of the domestic trafficking subgroup of the Interagency Child Abuse Network (ICAN) and working to create Los Angeles County's collaborative court, the STAR court, a court dedicated to youth charged with prostitution related crimes.

I am here today on behalf of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, one of the nation's largest and oldest judicial membership organizations serving judges and other professionals in the juvenile and family justice system.

Federal law defines the term "severe forms of trafficking in persons" as "(A) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or (B) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery."[1]

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[1] Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 [United States of America]. Public Law 106-386 [H.R. 3244]. 28 October 2000. Section 103(9).

Between 100,000 and 300,000 youth are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation annually in the United States.[2] The average age of entry into the commercial sex industry is 12-14 years old for girls[3] and 11-13 years old for boys and transgender youth in the United States.[4] In our courtrooms, the gender of the victims of domestic child sex trafficking is overwhelmingly female, but studies also suggest boys may be as affected by child sexual exploitation as girls but are hidden away and less well-served by human service and law-enforcement systems.[5]

The children arrested for prostitution related offenses have come via several paths: they may have been coerced or lured by gangs to engage in the commercial sex trade; they may have run away from abusive foster care placements or were recruited from group homes and coerced into sexual exploitation. Some may be LGBT youth who have fled unaccepting homes and end up in the commercial sex trade in order to survive. Perhaps less well-known are the youth who still live at home, but are trafficked by a family member or enter into a relationship with a pimp because of challenges encountered in their own homes. What many of these youth have in common is a history of child sexual abuse, early childhood trauma, and involvement in the child welfare system.

It is important to understand that these youth are not criminals. They are children who are being abused by sex traffickers, and they deserve the same protections and resources to which other child victims of sexual or physical abuse and neglect are

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[2] R. Estes and N. Weiner. Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. University of Pennsylvania, 2001, page 144. Determination of "at risk" status includes consideration of factors such as children who are runaways, "throwaways," victims of physical or sexual abuse, users of psychotropic drugs, and members of sexual minority groups

[3] National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: America's Prostituted Children. Washington, D.C.: Shared Hope International, 2009, page 30.

[4] Domestic Human Trafficking of Children and Youth Initial Findings Brief. The National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth, 2005, page 3.

[5] Id. at page 4.

entitled. Child victims of sexual abuse are comforted by assurances that they are not responsible for the abuse. Child victims of commercial sexual exploitation deserve the same assurances. The criminalization of commercial exploitation of children holds these children responsible for not preventing their exploitation.

Our society should not punish these young victims of crime who, as children, are legally incapable of consenting to sex acts. They should be protected from sex traffickers and pimps and provided treatment and not punishment. These children are desperately in need of safe housing, food, clothing and other basic necessities. These children should receive counseling, medical care, mental health services, and be reconnected with education. Between 70 and 90 percent of commercially sexually exploited youth have a history of child sexual abuse.[6] Youth who have had contact with the child welfare system are at a higher risk for commercial sexual exploitation than children who have not had involvement in the child welfare system.[7] For example, in Los Angeles, approximately 77% of youth charged with a prostitution-related offense have had prior contact with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).[8]

Traffickers are known to specifically target youth shelters, group homes, and foster care facilities as locations for recruitment of vulnerable foster youth.[9] Approximately 1.6 million children run away from home every year in the United States,[10] and these children are at high risk of child sexual exploitation due to their mental,

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[6] Bagley, C. & Young, L. (1987). Juvenile Prostitution and Child Sexual Abuse: A Controlled Study. Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health.; See also, Annual Report. (1991). Council for Prostitution Alternatives. Portland, Oregon.; See also, Murphy, Patricia. (1993). Making Connections: Women, Work, and Abuse. Paul M. Deutsch Press, Florida.

[7] National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, Shared Hope International, page 9.

[8] Los Angeles County Juvenile Delinquency Collaborative STAR Court Data, Assessment of open cases in November 2012.

[9] Id, page 58.

[10] National Runaway Switchboard, http://www.1800runaway.org/faq/#. Accessed 11/5/12.

physical, and financial vulnerability.[11] Pimps identify and exploit these vulnerabilities in order to bring them into the business and use psychological manipulation to keep them from leaving.[12] Youth who are commercially sexually exploited often suffer from negative long-term psychological, social and physical impacts, such as traumatic bonding.[13]

Trafficking takes a toll on minority youth. Although there is insufficient evidence to quantify the national prevalence and trends on child sex trafficking in the United States, local data from Los Angeles, a major hub for child sex trafficking in this country, indicate that there is a high disproportionate minority contact among victims of domestic child sex trafficking.[14] Although race and ethnicity of the victims can vary dramatically by city and neighboring cities,[15] a study conducted in New York State shows overrepresentation of minority youth among trafficked victims.[16]

But we still treat child victims of sex trafficking as criminals. In 39 states across the nation, youth who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation face criminal charges.[17] Injecting these youth into the juvenile justice system is an inappropriate response to this crisis. Child welfare is better suited to provide treatment and placement

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[11] National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, Shared Hope International, page 31.

[12] National Report on A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Domestic Sex Trafficking of Girls, Georgetown Law, Center on Poverty and Inequality, page 4.

[13] National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, Shared Hope International, page 41-44; Also see, National Report on A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Domestic Sex Trafficking of Girls, Georgetown Law, Center on Poverty and Inequality, page 4.

[14] Los Angeles Probation Department Data, 2010.

[15] Research to Action: Sexually Exploited Minors (SEM) Needs and Strengths, West Coast Children's Clinic. (2012), page 7; *see also* National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, Shared Hope International, page 9; *see also* Shattered Hearts: The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of American Indian Women and Girls in Minnesota. (2009). Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, pages 33-34.

[16] Sex Trafficking of Minors in New York: Increasing Prevention and Collective Action. (2012). The New York Women's Foundation, pages 5 & 7.

[17] Polaris Project, Current Laws, http://www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/policy-advocacy/current-laws (11 states have safe harbor laws protecting trafficked minors from criminal prosecution). Accessed 11/5/2012.

options. The dangers of incarceration which include exposure to criminally sophisticated youth, the attachment of the stigma of being labeled a criminal, and potential sexual and physical abuse while in custody are cruel responses to a social problem.[18] The mere exposure to the juvenile justice system leads to poor educational outcomes including drop out, and a much higher chance of leading a criminal lifestyle as an adult.[19] Judges need more solutions and services for this population. Detention can be re-traumatizing, exacerbating symptoms of PTSD that result from being trafficked.[20]

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) opposes the criminalization of victims of child sexual exploitation and supports the development and implementation of humane and appropriate laws and policies that are in line with the federal definition of a child victim of human trafficking. NCJFCJ is committed to assisting courts in understanding the complexities of these cases and is working with juvenile and family courts and stakeholders across the nation to define and operationalize what it means to be a trauma-responsive court, and develop a protocol to conduct "trauma audits" in courts to assess the degree to which environment, practice, and policy are trauma-responsive.

NCJFCJ promotes the development of specialized services and resources for victims of child trafficking in the juvenile court system, and within the community, including the development of non-detention triage facilities and specialized placement options that are equipped to effectively address the unique trauma suffered by victims of

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[18] The Case for Reducing Juveniles Incarceration: No Place for Kids, http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative/Resources/May10newsletter/CloserLook2.aspx; See also, Sentencing Project (1997), Facts About Prisons and Prisoners Briefing Fact Sheet; See also, Mendel, In Juvenile Justice Care, Boys Get Worse, Youth Today (2010); Growing evidence says juvenile systems exacerbate delinquency.

[19] Kirk and Sampson. Juvenile Arrest and Collateral Educational Damage in the Transition to Adulthood. American Sociological Association, 2013; See also, Petrosino, Turpin-Petrosino, Guckenberg, Formal System Processing of Juveniles: Effects on Delinquency. 2010.

[20] National Report on A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Domestic Sex Trafficking of Girls, Georgetown Law, Center on Poverty and Inequality, page 4.

child trafficking. We need a coordinated judicial response to decrease the number of children coerced into child sexual exploitation, including a network of communication among judges of different jurisdictions. Delinquency and dependency courts must work in partnership to identify child victims of human trafficking and protect them from exploitation. NCJFCJ is dedicated to promoting the exercise of judicial leadership to convene local stakeholder and community groups in an effort to improve and enhance system responses to the needs of child victims of sex trafficking. These collaboratives must include court personnel, law enforcement, government agencies and community organizations. Juvenile court judges must promote the development and implementation of training curricula within schools and foster care to address the risk factors for runaway youth and inform youth of the common tactics of, and risks associated with, human traffickers. NCJFCJ is developing a curriculum for juvenile and family courts and will make this training accessible to judges around the country. Judicial education is underfunded and legislation that includes funding should consider judicial education as a purpose area in order to make change happen around the country.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Thank you very much, Judge. The Chair recognizes himself for 5 minutes.

First of all, let me say that this is probably one of the most interesting hearings that we have had before the Subcommittee in my time as Chair of it. Every one of you has spoken to this problem from a different perspective, and what I can say is that we really need to adopt an all of the above type response to this.

A lot of this, of course, will require changes in State legislation, particularly in the 39 States that still criminalize child prostitution. And I think we have to make a big difference in the law between child prostitution and adult prostitution. I do not think that adult prostitutes who legally know what they are doing, should have the same type of sympathy as the child prostitutes.

So I think that we should look at this from both a supply standpoint and a demand standpoint. We do need to deal with getting at the traffickers and getting at the pimps. We also need to get at the johns or the customers, those who are exploiting these children for their own pleasure. And I think that that is going to be more of an activity that law enforcement is going to have to be more engaged in. And when we look at the demand side, the customers, I think, are going to have to be zeroed in, too.

When we are talking about victims, I agree with you, Judge and Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew, that we have to treat juvenile victims differently. And I think one of the reasons why we have to treat them differently is we need to encourage them to testify against those who have enslaved them. And having their first contact with law enforcement be something that is more humane and less daunting I think will encourage more credible testimony for when a john or a trafficker ends up appearing in a criminal court. And having these young victims testify in front of a jury, it would be very, very hard if that testimony sounds sincere and from the heart and wanting to get at this problem and get rid of it. And, as a result I think that a triage rather than a juvenile justice response, at least immediately, I think is necessary.

Now, I would like to ask in my remaining time, Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew, if you think that better reporting of children who go missing right from the get-go is essential to trying to stop this trade. I was one of those that put together the Missing Children's Act back in 1982 and putting in statute amber alerts. But in order for either of those activities to become active, there has to be a report that ends up getting put out on the Internet, may be an amber alert issue. How critical do you think that doing that would be?

Ms. ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW. Well, I definitely want to say thank you for bringing up that perspective. I think it is very critical in understanding specifically, as Honorable Groman has expressed, a lot of the young people come from child welfare system and things of that sort.

From my experience and from my experience both as a young person living in the system and as a professional, there are different things that happen. Oftentimes specifically in group homes, young people are not reported missing based on the fear that the funding will get cut off and then they will return again, and then they will have to go through the process all over again.

So I definitely think that that is something that we do need to highlight as far as specifically young people who come from systems because I can say from my knowledge, understanding the lack of, I guess, attention that is put on young foster children, that when they go missing the exploiters actually rely on that as a safety guard. They know that nobody is looking for them, that there are not posters out here looking for these young children. And so, they know that they can continue to get away with this.

And it is sad that this already vulnerable population of young people in child welfare do not get the special attention that they need when they do come up missing. And, I think that we have heard from different perspectives and looking in our history in criminal crimes and all that.

Foster children are very vulnerable. And so, making sure that we alert people when they go missing, making sure that it is public, making sure that we do have an opportunity to give amber alerts for these young people. Just sadly enough, I can say that that does not seem the case as of now.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Thank you very much. My time has expired. The gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Harpster, can you tell us what charges can be brought against a 40-year-old who pays for sex with a 14-year-old?

Mr. HARPSTER. We could use State or local laws through our task forces, or we could use 1591 sex trafficking, a Federal offense that carries a minimum mandatory.

Mr. SCOTT. Of what?

Mr. HARPSTER. Pardon me, sir?

Mr. SCOTT. Mandatory minimum of what?

Mr. HARPSTER. So under 14 would be 15 years. Between 14 and 17 would be a 10-year minimum mandatory.

Mr. SCOTT. Are fines involved?

Mr. HARPSTER. There are, sir, yes.

Mr. SCOTT. Now, when you catch someone in this situation, what charges are actually brought?

Mr. HARPSTER. For the customers, sir, in what you described?

Mr. SCOTT. Right.

Mr. HARPSTER. We would hope that 1591 would be brought, and that can happen. We work in liaison with our State and local——

Mr. SCOTT. Wait a minute. When you have some of these roundups like you had at the Super Bowl, what charges are brought?

Mr. HARPSTER. Correct. So let us take the last operation cross country where we had 151 pimps that were arrested. We would work with local——

Mr. SCOTT. Not pimps, johns.

Mr. HARPSTER. Johns. So that number I do not have here right now, sir. But I will tell you this, that when we are working with or State and locals, we look at the johns, at the customers, and we choose the best mechanism to remove them from the street, because the Federals always come in later down the line. So when we are doing a criminal enterprise, that john may be included.

Mr. SCOTT. You have a roundup. It is kind of hard to have a prosecution without a john involved. When you have a prosecution, what charges are brought against the johns?

Mr. HARPSTER. As I said earlier, sir, working with our State and local, we would look at the johns for what the best charges are that time. The initiative when we are out there, our number one——

Mr. SCOTT. What charges are typically brought?

Mr. HARPSTER. It would be a pandering charge or a prostitution charge, soliciting. If they cross State lines, we do a Mann Act.

Mr. SCOTT. What happened to that 15-year mandatory minimum case?

Mr. HARPSTER. If it is going to be——

Mr. SCOTT. Have you ever brought a 15-year mandatory minimum charge against a john?

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCOTT. How often does that happen?

Mr. HARPSTER. Just last week we had a plead out in Sioux Falls where we arrested nine johns for soliciting under age victims, and the last one did plead. There are eight more to go. Just the week before that, we had a reverse operation in Savannah where they were also charged.

Mr. SCOTT. And what did the one plead guilty to?

Mr. HARPSTER. 1591, sir. It was a 15-year mandatory.

Mr. SCOTT. And so, we can expect when these roundups occur that the johns will be charged with crimes that carry 10- to 15-year mandatory minimum sentences.

Mr. HARPSTER. When the facts are present and working with the DoJ, U.S. attorney's office, and the rest of the prosecutors, we could expect that.

Mr. SCOTT. You get these websites that have people that are apparently soliciting. Do you ever do stings to catch johns?

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCOTT. And then what do you charge them with?

Mr. HARPSTER. The 1591. If we were doing it from a Federal perspective, we would charge the 1591. The one in Sioux Falls——

Mr. SCOTT. There is a TV program that that I am sure you are aware of.

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCOTT. And the end shows these guys getting, like, 3 months and 6 months, maybe as much as a year. What happened to the 15-year mandatory minimum charge?

Mr. HARPSTER. I am not sure about the TV show if the Federals were involved at that level, sir.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, are you doing these?

Mr. HARPSTER. We have issues with that kind of TV show, so that is kind of——

Mr. SCOTT. I mean, not the TV show, but, I mean, do you post stuff or chase down and try to catch people?

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes. During reverse sting operations, we would use the Internet or postings to attract customers for under age——

Mr. SCOTT. And then people who respond to these postings, what can they expect at the end?

Mr. HARPSTER. They will hopefully expect to be prosecuted. That is where we are at. With the sting operators that are aimed at the johns, with our Innocence Lost Initiative, we are aimed at recovering victims.

Mr. SCOTT. Judge Groman, how often do you see johns being hauled into court on charges that carry 10- to 15-year mandatory minimums?

Judge GROMAN. I am actually in a juvenile court assignment, so I do not see adults being prosecuted, but I could speak in general terms. In Los Angeles, those prosecutions are very few and far between.

Mr. SCOTT. What would it take, Mr. Harpster, to get you to bring these charges more routinely against johns? It would have, it would appear, to have a significant deterrent effect if people thought they were looking at 10 to 15 years in prison for soliciting sex with teenagers.

Mr. HARPSTER. It would require from a national level for us to redirect our resources. Currently we are aimed at recovering victims and getting those victims the services that they need. We also do sting operations, but it is not our number one priority at this time.

So we can, when appropriate, aim our resources at reverse sting operations and arrest those johns and work in coordination with State and locals. We hope that when we go and we give training that they will carry on that type of opportunity outside of the task forces and the Federal initiatives that we run.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Forbes.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank first you and the Ranking Member for holding this hearing. Thank all of you for being here.

Director Harpster, I know that the 2005 Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act required a number of studies, and I was wondering if you could just help us with the accuracy of the data that you have to do those studies. And if you do not have the accuracy, is partial information enough to get you the kind of input that you need?

Mr. HARPSTER. So the issue we currently are dealing with is the issue of accurate data. Lots of numbers between 100,000 to 200,000 of child victims out there. There are 50 different States that handle victims 50 different ways. In the State of New Jersey, for example, they will not even write reports on child victims for fear that it would basically re-victimize that person. That is an issue for us when we are trying to collect data.

Through our task forces and through our training with the State and locals, we have created a NCIC database, which is the only database of its kind. And it is specifically aimed at collecting those non-arrest situations, which would not be reported in NCIC.

So with hopefully the database coming up, we use that through our intelligence, through other NGOs and social services where they have that information where they actually see those people in their facilities, or see those people come through for services. We can use those numbers to come to a better guestimate.

Mr. FORBES. Okay. Mr. Chairman, I would like to defer the balance of my time to Judge Poe from Texas with the Chair's permission.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas is recognized.

Mr. POE. I thank the gentleman from Virginia for yielding and the Chairman for holding this hearing. And thank all four of you for being here. I think it is interesting how you are seated. We have the law on one end. We have the judge on the other end. We have the victim sitting in between the police. I think that is good. It means a lot.

To continue what you said, basically should be our focus. The kids are not for sale, period, under any circumstances ever. There are three people, if you will, in this tragedy, in this crime. There is a victim. On the other end is the slave master, trafficker, and then there is also the demand. I do not call those people johns because, you know, John was a good guy in the Bible. I call them child abusers because that is what they are, child abusers. I would like to address each one of those and get some answers from you on some specific questions in the remaining time.

Starting with the children, how is it possible that we could have a phrase of "juvenile prostitution?" How could that exist? Under the law, a child cannot consent to sex. It is not prostitution to me. Judge, can you help me out with that? Is that a term that we should not be using anymore, "juvenile prostitution?"

Judge GROMAN. I think that is an awful term. You know, the problem is that sometimes we see children in our juvenile court that come in with other charges, so they are not always being charged with that unspeakable term. So they are coming in on charges of petty theft, or battery, or criminal threats. There are a whole host of different charges that they come to our court with.

Mr. POE. Reclaiming my time, I only have a couple of minutes. But the phrase "child prostitution," as a jurist do you think that is a phrase we should not be using under the law?

Judge GROMAN. Absolutely.

Mr. POE. We have in this country, I understand, through Shared Hope, there are 300 beds for children who are trafficked, 300 beds, child traffic victims. On the other hand, according to the SPCA, we have 5,000 shelters for animals. Not quarreling with that. I have got three Dalmatians. I got one of them from Dalmatian Rescue. But I think we need to focus on the victim first. Rescue the victim and find a place to house them.

We have two different standards, international victims that come into the United States that are trafficked here and domestic victims moved from across the country. International victims, I understand, can apply for certification under HHS and receive certain services that a domestic trafficked victim cannot receive and cannot receive that certification.

Do you think, Judge, we ought to change that so that victims can be treated alike whether they are international or domestic?

Judge GROMAN. There is an absolute need for safe housing for these young people. And absolutely there should be no discrepancy whether they are internationally trafficked or domestically trafficked.

Mr. POE. Thank you.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The gentleman's time has expired.

The gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Conyers.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you, Chairman Sensenbrenner. I begin by commending Ms. Walker Pettigrew for her insight and actual cour-

age of coming forward, putting a face on this problem, and then going on to become a professional in the field yourself. I am very respectful of what you have done in bringing this subject forward.

Now, Corporal Heid, police officer, how often are johns arrested and charged, and how often are they let go from just your general experience?

Mr. HEID. With what we do in my own unit, the Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit, we are only going after looking for young girls. We are out there looking for the missing girls, the abducted children, and the juvenile victims.

For instance, if we are working a case and we get wind that a 17-year-old girl might be missing and she might be involved in prostitution, we are there to recover that girl. We are not going to sit and wait and watch another john walk into that room. So our focus is solely to get that girl out. If we can build a case down the line, we will build a case down the line. But we are not going to sit and wait and watch another john walk into a room to re-victimize a young lady.

To answer your question, we do not arrest johns, the Maryland State Police. We take part with the FBI if they do a joint operation, and we do a reversal sting where we are putting out ads, bringing johns in. I have been a part of that.

Mr. CONYERS. Okay. Let me ask you, what is the race of most of most johns, and what is the race for most victims?

Mr. HEID. I think in my experience in Maryland, most of the johns are White males, and there is a mixture of the females, the girls—Black, White—in Maryland.

Mr. CONYERS. I wanted to get the color question in here because I think if we do not, we will not get a real clear picture. Would you add anything to this, Ms. Pettigrew?

Ms. ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW. Just as I said in my testimony, I believe this as to be true in my understanding or my knowledge, again, as a person who has experienced it as well as a professional working with other young victims.

Mr. CONYERS. Now, you were, in fact, victimized again when you were arrested and interrogated. What thoughts or proposals would you make to law enforcement to help them treat victims more appropriately?

Ms. ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW. I very much thank you for asking that question. I definitely think that, one, that young people should have a survivor advocate with them present any time that they are interrogated or questioned as a witness because I think that there is something to be said as far as having a supporter who has been a survivor. But even separate from that, even if it cannot be someone who has the experience of a survivor, someone who is trained in understanding the trauma and the situational circumstances of survivors who can stand in and be a survivor advocate during the interrogation and the questioning. I just do not see that happening all too often in a nationwide perspective.

Mr. CONYERS. And in your experience and those who you have mentored, what alternatives to detention are most appropriate for victims?

Ms. ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW. I definitely think when we talk about, you know, detaining, like I said, I do not think detention is

prevention. I think that the alternative to detention could really be looking into community-based programs. And basically instead of sentencing young people to serve a certain amount of time in detention, we can start to sentence them to engage in self-exploration activities and things of that sort so that they have the ability to really gain the services and the skills needed to make the best out of their life and to fight the pressures in the situations that are coming around them in their environment.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you so much, and I commend all of the witnesses, Mr. Chairman, for their contributions.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Yes, thank you. The gentleman's time has expired.

The gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Goodlatte.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Harpster, can you explain how the FBI works in conjunction with State and local law enforcement to investigate and prosecute traffickers? What is the Federal role in the crime, and are you more focused on broader criminal enterprises?

Mr. HARPSTER. So if I can start with the middle question, what is the Federal role, we see our role as bringing people together. So with our Federal funding that we have, we like to go out and create task forces. We have 69 child exploitation task forces which have almost a thousand members from 400 different agencies.

With these task forces, we have the ability to go after the issue on the local level and the national level. So our task forces made up of local detectives and agents will work a case in California and they will address that issue for that area of responsibility.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Let me ask you about that. Is the FBI only involved when the trafficker crosses State lines, or do you work with State and local law enforcement to combat intra-State trafficking as well?

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes, we work on intra-State trafficking. For us, the trafficker does not have to leave the State to be charged with a sex trafficking offense.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you. Good. What is the FBI doing to combat the online promotion of minor sex trafficking?

Mr. HARPSTER. It is an issue we are aware of, an issue we are working on. If you bring up Backpage, we have identified over 100 such sites as those that will promote child sex trafficking, and we use technology to thwart that as well. So not only do we look at and monitor them, at the same time our intelligence units will go out there around special events where we can expect an increase in online posting. We will obviously scrub harder those sites to get those leads.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Ms. Pettigrew, you have been working with victims of minor sex trafficking for a number of years now. Thank you for that good work. What have you learned from this process that might help Congress understand the problem, and what can we do to better protect and help victims?

Ms. ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW. Again, a lot of what I said in my testimony is going to answer that question. I think definitely the first thing that I noticed is that we cannot just remove young people and expect the problem to go away. So there are a lot of amaz-

ing opportunities and services that are provided that allow young people to live in like the country.

I think that those are amazing ideas and amazing programs. Yet the problem is that they do not allow young people to re-assimilate into the community and environments that first got them in the position in the first place. And so, I think that we need to do more in regards to when we are working in residential treatment with young people and young victims in balancing their re-assimilation into their mainstream community.

Also I think that, again, what I stated earlier is that really we have to give them power. We have to allow them to understand the law is on their side to be able to assist them with facing their exploiter and things of that sort. We also have to let them know that there are services to help them, but we first and foremost need to understand that we cannot help them if we are still labeling them as prostitutes. And secondly, we have to understand that it really is going to take them understanding that they have capabilities to be able to fight back.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Good. Let me go on to Judge Groman. Much of the discussion regarding minor sex trafficking focuses on pimps, ignoring that this is a marketplace equally fueled by the adults that purchase children for sex. Why do States treat minor victims as criminals or at least delinquents, and does this not imply that there is some moral equivalence between minors and the adults that exploit them?

Judge GROMAN. With regard to the criminalization, I think one of the reasons that criminal laws are still on the books is because the juvenile justice system has been the only system that has been working with these young people. And so, there is a great deal of concern if prostitution is decriminalized, that there is not going to be a child welfare system that is equipped and prepared to take over the role of working with these young people. So I think it is very, very important that we place the responsibility on child welfare to work with these young people.

Some of the laws in States do not allow child welfare to intervene where the trafficker or the customer is not apparent, or other caretaker. So when you are involved with third persons who are trafficking young people, child welfare laws or child welfare agencies do not believe that they have the ability to intervene in that situation. And so, that needs to be changed.

Child welfare agencies should be the primary agency responsible so that juvenile justice does not have to continue to provide the services and support for these young people.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentlewoman from California, Ms. Bass.

Ms. BASS. I will yield 30 seconds of my time to the Chairman.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you.

Ms. BASS. The Ranking Member, I am sorry.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Harpster, you mentioned 1591. That is trafficking. Since minors cannot consent, do you ever charge them with just rape?

Mr. HARPSTER. I do not have the——

Mr. SCOTT. Would you do that in the future?

Mr. HARPSTER. I have to get back to you on that. I am trying to look through the elements of 1591 in my head, and I do not want to say or assume it is in there that the sexual contact is part of that offense. I am not sure on that, sir. I will get back to you on that one.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, I mean, since a minor cannot consent, it ought to be a straight rape charge, and we would like to start bringing those. If you could get back to us. Thank you. I thank the gentlelady.

[The information referred to follows:]

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much. Well, first of all, I want to thank all of the witnesses for their time and their expertise and dedication to this issue. I have to tell you, I have seen Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew testify a number of times. And the point that she makes consistently, which is the child welfare system really prepared her to be a victim. And the child welfare system is our responsibility, so we have to repair that.

Judge, I think you eloquently said that we currently hold children responsible for not preventing their own exploitation. I wanted to ask Corporal Heid, when you are recovering the girls, do you keep stats on the ones that are connected to the child welfare system? Do you have stats on that?

Mr. HEID. Yes. We would have that at our office, yes.

Ms. BASS. And do you know what they are off hand?

Mr. HEID. I would say the vast majority, I mean, percentage wise, probably 90 plus percent we do get assistance. There are times depending on which county we are in that we——

Ms. BASS. No, they are from the child welfare system. Is that what you mean?

Mr. HEID. I am sorry. I thought you meant referring them after the fact.

Ms. BASS. No, no, no, no. I am asking how many of the girls that you recover were foster kids.

Mr. HEID. I am sorry. We have had several. The majority of them are not.

Ms. BASS. Do you track that data?

Mr. HEID. Yes. Yes.

Ms. BASS. Okay. Can you get back to me and let me know?

Mr. HEID. Sure.

[The information referred to follows:]

Ms. BASS. Because I am concerned in talking to the FBI in Los Angeles, they know it is 40 percent, but they think that is way under reported. And so, I think one of the things that we need to do is keep better data on that because that, again, is our system. I mean, you know, when those kids are put in child welfare, we are responsible for them. We are the parent.

Mr. HEID. Correct.

Ms. BASS. You know, I really do think that we have to address the language. It kills me to hear "johns" and "customers" used for child molesters. And I think as long as we use that language, we normalize it in a way. And the only way we are going to break past that is if we label it for what it is. And also the term "prostitution," which has been said a number of times. We have to change that language in order to change our mentality.

Mr. Harpster, I wanted to know when you were dealing in law enforcement agencies, how difficult is it for you to get them to see the girls as victims and not as criminals?

Mr. HARPSTER. It is an issue we are dealing with. We have had relationships with the National Association of Chiefs of Police where we are actually developing roll call videos for them. We are doing training with the national school resource officers as well to get them to be able to identify them as victims as opposed to just people on the——

Ms. BASS. Well, and I want to know if you think that there is more that we can do. I am very proud to be a co-sponsor with Judge Poe and his efforts in his legislation, and also on the Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee Chairman Reichert. We have legislation. I have legislation that I am working on specifically around the child welfare issue.

And, Judge, I would just ask you, child welfare has difficulty with child molestation. If somebody beats up a kid, is that considered child abuse?

Judge GROMAN. Well, it is child abuse, but whether child welfare can intervene really depends on whether the abuser is a parent or caretaker. And if not, then they do not have the ability under the current state of laws, at least in the State of California, to intervene.

Ms. BASS. Okay. Ms. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew, I mean, your description of being incarcerated was just heartbreaking frankly. One problem that I have heard you say before and other people is that when girls are first brought in, it is difficult for them to break away from the pimp. And so, when you were saying that you thought community-based services are needed, do you think it is ever appropriate to hold a girl against her will so that she can at least have a few days to break out of the psychology?

Ms. ORTIZ WALKER PETTIGREW. I can definitely see that perspective, and I think it definitely is back onto an individual based situation. If there is no other, if it is the last resort, and you are doing it in the efforts of just, again, trying to keep the young person safe. I mean, again, our options are limited.

I do think that we need to more mindful in holding young people against their will because all we are doing is replacing what the exploiter or the pimp does. So then it puts us in the same proximity of the relationship that we have with that young person as that pimp does.

And so, just understanding that we need to extend these services. We need to extend these opportunities for these programs because they need to build connections and relationships elsewhere outside of the ones that they have with their pimp because oftentimes that is the strongest relationship in their lives.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

The gentleman from Alabama, Mr. Bachus.

Mr. BACHUS. Thank you. Ms. Ortiz, she mentioned——

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Could the gentleman turn his——

Mr. BACHUS. I am sorry. Ms. Ortiz Pettigrew Walker, she mentioned having to shower with male guards watching her. Recently in Alabama we had a case with similar charges in our women's prisons that that was going on. Is that a common occurrence?

Judge GROMAN. Well, when you are talking about detention in a penal facility, yes, it is a common occurrence. And I think that is probably the biggest problem here is we are detaining children in penal facilities that are meant for young people who are a danger to the community. And so, those are all things that are inherent in being in a penal facility where you lose your privacy, danger of being abused in the custody arena.

So I think where we really have to work with these young people is if they are going to be in a secure setting, it should not be a penal setting. It should be more of a hospital therapeutic setting just as we have children who are dangers to themselves because of mental health concerns. Those are the types of settings that should be used in a secure manner and not penal facilities.

Mr. BACHUS. Now, what about adult women? I mean, you know, should they be exposed to that? I mean, they are prisoners, but, I mean, I guess they lose their civil rights.

Judge GROMAN. I just think that is the nature of custodial facilities for people who are being held on criminal charges.

Mr. BACHUS. Okay. Let me ask Acting Director Harpster, FBI, how many total agents are there investigating crime? Just give me a ballpark figure.

Mr. HARPSTER. I am sorry, sir?

Mr. BACHUS. Total agents in the field.

Mr. HARPSTER. Total agents? Currently we are about a little over 400. That is not including task force members.

Mr. BACHUS. Now, you are talking about in your division?

Mr. HARPSTER. I am talking about the FBI as a whole.

Mr. BACHUS. As a whole.

Mr. HARPSTER. As a whole.

Mr. BACHUS. Four hundred?

Mr. HARPSTER. That is the agents, 400. Total number is about 900. We have got about 500 task force officers. That is a rough estimate, but about that.

Mr. BACHUS. You are talking about all Federal agents nationwide?

Mr. HARPSTER. I am talking about FBI, sir.

Mr. BACHUS. FBI, that is what I am saying. FBI.

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes. Yes.

Mr. BACHUS. Okay. I would have just thought it was quite a bit more than that.

Mr. HARPSTER. The SACs have the ability to, you know, flex their, we call it FSL or staffing to a threat. So if there is a large incident going on or the threat is high, they can move people back and forth.

Mr. BACHUS. Okay. Are there priorities within the FBI? I have heard domestic terrorism is a priority. Public corruption is a priority. Is there some list of priorities or is there a checklist or anything about——

Mr. HARPSTER. So the director has made it clear that children are his number one priority along with counterterrorism. So within our program, we have priorities—child abductions, child sex trafficking, child pornography production and manufacturing. But it is at the top of the list.

Mr. BACHUS. You know, I noticed in a statement by the director and actually by an FBI agent in Alabama that the two priorities were public corruption and domestic terrorism. You know, they did not mention human trafficking, and I do not know if that was an oversight or what. But is there any printed priority?

Mr. HARPSTER. There is. When Director Mueller came in, the overall priority would be counterterrorism, and then I believe——

Mr. BACHUS. Could you share that information or supply that to the Committee?

Mr. HARPSTER. Sure, I would be happy to.

[The information referred to follows:]

Mr. BACHUS. How many agents are devoted to human trafficking? Any solely devoted to that?

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes, that is a separate branch, so my comment would be a guess. But I will include that information for you, sir.

Mr. BACHUS. So you are not in that branch?

Mr. HARPSTER. That is correct. Human trafficking comes under the Civil Rights Section.

Mr. BACHUS. All right. Sexual exploitation, that is your branch?

Mr. HARPSTER. Correct, sir.

Mr. BACHUS. How many agents are involved in that as their sole responsibility?

Mr. HARPSTER. Under my program, again that 400 number comes in.

Mr. BACHUS. How many?

Mr. HARPSTER. Four hundred, sir.

Mr. BACHUS. How many agents are there nationwide in the FBI?

Mr. HARPSTER. Approximately 12,000, I believe.

Mr. BACHUS. Oh, that was my question when you responded with 400. I am sorry. So there are 12,000 agents, but 400 are devoted——

Mr. HARPSTER. That number will go up and down, but those are the ones that are devoted.

Mr. BACHUS. To sexual exploitation.

Mr. HARPSTER. And that will change from month to month as well.

Mr. BACHUS. Do they do something else other than sexual exploitation?

Mr. HARPSTER. Those would be the ones who are assigned to the Crimes Against Children. So it could——

Mr. BACHUS. Okay, 400 of the 12,000?

Mr. HARPSTER. Yes.

Mr. BACHUS. Okay.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Gohmert.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of our witnesses. As a father of three girls, it breaks my heart to hear the testimony and to think that any children would be treated as you have, Ms. Pettigrew. Having been a judge, I have sentenced people a lot longer than 15 years for doing what has been done.

I applaud the efforts. I think we should do more. I think that my friend on the other side, Ms. Bass, is right. We ought to properly characterize who are the victims and who are the perps.

But I want to yield my time to a man that has a bill, Ted Poe, at this time for the rest of my time.

Mr. POE. I thank the gentleman, Judge Gohmert, for yielding. I know how valuable time is when we are in these hearings and how you like to ask a lot of questions, so I appreciate that a great deal.

There was a hearing last week in Houston put on the Homeland Security. And my friend, Ms. Jackson Lee and Mike McCaul hosted that, and I was there. And we learned a lot of things, but we learned that Houston, Texas, according to the testimony, is the hub of international trafficking into the United States, that kids, boys and girls, are smuggled to Houston from all over, and they are sent throughout the fruited plain. It is a tragedy.

Director Harpster, I want two numbers. How many people have been prosecuted who are in the situation of being the customer in a prostitution enterprise, whether it is for rape, or whether it is for being a customer? How many have the FBI prosecuted in the last year?

Mr. HARPSTER. I apologize, sir. I do not have that number with me, but I will get it for you.

Mr. POE. How many people have the FBI prosecuted who are international sex tourism criminals? They go from the United States and they go to some other country for sex tourism, and it is with a minor. How many of those people have been prosecuted in the last year?

Mr. HARPSTER. We have a child sex tourism initiative which comes under my program.

Mr. POE. Just the number. I just want a number.

Mr. HARPSTER. Again, I do not want to give you the wrong number. I want to give you an accurate one, and I will get to that to you. But it is——

Mr. POE. Not very many.

Mr. HARPSTER. It is all relative, sir.

Mr. POE. Not very many. Furnish that to the Chairman and to the Ranking Member if you would as the protocol requires under the rules.

If I understand it correctly, in sex tourism, if a person goes from the United States to Costa Rica, you have to prove their primary purpose for going there to prosecute them was for sex tourism. Is that correct?

[The information referred to follows:]

Mr. HARPSTER. No.

Mr. POE. So you can go down there on a business operation, and then you can be involved with a child and then a person could be prosecuted even though their primary purpose was not sex tourism, is that correct?

Mr. HARPSTER. If the evidence is developed that you either had a conspiracy to have sex with that child or have sex with a child, that is a chargeable offense.

Mr. POE. I understand when I was there, I was told by the government and by the shelter that around 80 percent of the people going to Costa Rica for sex tourism are from the United States. Would you argue with that or not?

Mr. HARPSTER. I would not argue with the fact that Costa Rica is a destination for child sex trafficking.

Mr. POE. Okay. I want to be careful in my numbers because sex tourism or prostitution with adults is legal, but it is not legal with children in Costa Rica, is that correct?

Mr. HARPSTER. In Costa Rica, I believe the age of consent is 14 years old.

Mr. POE. All right. I think the system, in the remaining time, our system I think does fairly well to go after traffickers. We are not doing too good with the victim on the other end. I want to center on the person in the middle, and you are going to get me that number, how many people have been prosecuted.

Congress, in my opinion, needs to send a clear and convincing message that the days of boys being boys is over in the United States when it comes to sex, child abuse rather, with children.

What about the RICO statute? Have you used the RICO statute to go after the child abuser, Mr. Harpster? You will get back with me on that.

Mr. HARPSTER. I will get with you on that.

Mr. POE. Okay.

Mr. HARPSTER. I know we do use——

Mr. POE. Do you think it is a good idea?

Mr. HARPSTER. We use the Child Enterprise Act, which is similar to the RICO for conspiracy for both the customer and also the pimp as well. So we have used that in that past.

Mr. POE. Do you agree with me that we should quit calling the child abuser, the guy in the middle, anything but a child abuser, rapist, terminology?

Mr. HARPSTER. I would concur with you, sir, that, yes, that is true.

Mr. POE. All right. And, Judge, I want to ask you one last question on victims. I think we have talked a little bit about victims, not enough. Do you see that there is a whole range of services that need to be provided for victims, and one way we can do this is when the police capture these traffickers or the child abusers, Federal judges are allowed to impose some type of fee on them that goes into some kind of fund that eventually goes to services, whether it is law enforcement, NGOs, or county services? Do you think that is a pretty good idea or not?

Judge GROMAN. Yes, there are actually a number of States that are using those funds for that purpose. Housing is a huge priority, and if those funds are used to provide supportive housing for these young people, I think that that is very important.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. The time of the gentleman has expired. That concludes the questioning by Members of the Subcommittee. All time that has been allocated to the Members of the Subcommittee who are present has expired.

So without objection, the Subcommittee hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

Courtney's House
EMBRACING THE CHILD HURT IN SEX TRAFFICKING

March 25, 2014

Courtney's House Written Testimony

My name is Tina Frundt I'm the founder of Courtney's House based in Washington DC, we provide services for Domestic Minors of sex trafficking both male and female ages 12yrs-21yrs.

I am also a survivor of child sex trafficking. Who was placed into foster care at 3years old, my earliest memory of child sexual abuse happened in foster care, this abuse continue in many foster homes, around 10 or so it turned into being sold to other's for sexual purposes, this was happening all around me with the other foster children it became a norm, although I reported this numerous times to my many social workers it became very clear no one believed me. This set the tone for many years. Luckily at 12yrs old I was adopted to a loving family however I suffered years of abuse and had to deal with that trauma.

I was 13 years old when I fell in love for the first time – he turned out to be a pimp. I was raped once again psychologically manipulated, sold for sex, and beaten. My past experience of being abused and sold and not having specialized counseling kept me from thinking anyone truly cared about me.

When I founded Courtney's House in the District of Columbia which provides street outreach/research, case management, support group, specialized sex trafficking assessments, national for survivor by survivor hotline and soon parent support groups, we specialize in trauma informed serves to both boys and girls of sex trafficking. Courtney's House serves U.S. Citizen survivors of sex trafficking ages 12-18yrs and emergency case management for ages 19-21yrs for up to 30days in all of Washington DC, Northern VA, and Maryland to Baltimore.

Being the only survivor of sex trafficking lead organization in the Washington DC area I committed to developing and providing the specialized services that I did not receive when I was in and out of the foster care system. Providing services to over 600 survivors of sex trafficking I quickly realized that what happened to me years ago was continuing to happen what was more compelling is this was happening at a faster rate than before it was plain to see people did not understand the right questions to ask to truly identify sex trafficked youth to provide specialized services.

I created a specialized sex trafficking assessment that breaks down individuals sex trafficking schemas pimp control, gang control, family and boys/transgender, these questions are specific to terminology and rules that are associated with each sex trafficking schema, upon implicating

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Courtney's House

EMBRACING THE CHILD HURT IN SEX TRAFFICKING

these assessments we have realized that 100% of our boys are or were involved in the foster care system, 33% of our girls were involved in the foster care system, most of our referrals for our boys do not come directly from the foster care system, the first contact is on the street during our street outreach program at night between the hours of 2am-8am or inside the juvenile detention facilities, with only an handful of direct referral come from the foster care system, with the girls we work with it's an even mixture of referrals coming from foster care, juvenile detention, court systems and about 44% are referred by their parents or guardians, We also realized with our sex trafficking assessments that the girls who were in the foster care system, the national statics on sex trafficking was right the average age of entry into forced prostitution was 12-14yrs old, with 100% that were in foster care being sexual abused inside the system, for our boys 98% percent entered foster care system between the ages of 6-10years and were being sex trafficked by their family members however the sexual abuse came in under child sexual abuse not sex trafficking, all of the boys who came into the foster care system was additionally trafficked between the ages of 12-14yrs old, what this means to us is that there are many more boys and girls who are simply not being asked the right questions to receive specialized services, we at Courtney's House understands this, and our recommendation for housing is a standard of care for all sex trafficking specific shelters around the country, this means the Anti-Trafficking movement would follow the same standard of care as domestic violence shelters and sexual assault programs, the difference would be the curriculum will be specifically for sex trafficking, this would be a curriculum that many around the country including survivor run programs would help to develop this way we are ensuring that survivors of sex trafficking are getting the right services to succeed this would also mean the data that is collected would be accurate if everyone is using the same tools we would be able to see how long it takes to succeed and how effective the model is. The next piece is that not every victim needs housing, how are there needs being met? Long term services should also be covered that includes individual counseling and support groups.

As a survivor of sex trafficking I did NOT need housing what I did need was specialized services that would help me transition my mind set out of my trafficking situation and support for my parents, this is why Courtney's House has the only parent support groups in the country so that the entire family can get the services they need to thrive.

As the voice of a survivor and now a leader in providing services to victims of domestic minor sex trafficking, I urge the government to ensure that all victims of trafficking not matter there age or gender gets the services they deserve.

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