**2019 Policy Agenda and Priorities**

Freedom Network USA (FNUSA) is grounded in a framework of human rights. Thus, FNUSA actively pursues anti-trafficking policies that:

* + Address the root causes which make people vulnerable to trafficking;
  + Protect the rights of victims and those vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation; and
  + Respect both the rights of the individual and reflect the diversity of survivors.

For 2019, FNUSA will prioritize these issues:

1. **Ensure Full Implementation of Human Trafficking Legislation and Policies:** The TVPA created a robust blueprint, however, implementation is lackluster. Labor trafficking investigations and prosecutions remain distressingly rare. Immigration protections for trafficking survivors are now out of reach due to USCIS policies that threaten trafficking survivors with deportation, adjudication times that have more than doubled, fee waiver requests are denied with alarming regularity, and unreasonably demands for unnecessary information and documentation from survivors. Government sanctioned discrimination makes people vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, while denying them support.

Specifically, FNUSA will work to:

* Protect the T Visa by opposing USCIS’ NTA Policy, Fee Waiver revisions, Public Benefit revisions, Asylum restrictions, and EOIR practice restrictions.
* Protect comprehensive legal services for trafficking survivors by removing restrictions on OVC grant funds for vacatur representation.
* Support the Human Trafficking Survivor Tax Relief Act (S 169/HR 619).
* Support a clean reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.
* Oppose any rollbacks in protections for LGBTQIA+ community members.

1. **Support Safe Migration:** The administration’s cruel immigration policies are pushing vulnerable communities into the shadows; creating a chilling effect among abused workers, trafficking victims, and domestic violence survivors; and forcing refugees into dangerous migration paths. When immigrants fear the US government, they stop reporting the abuse and exploitation that they suffer. These policies empower traffickers, rapists, and abusers; leaving survivors without protection and support.

Specifically, FNUSA will work to:

* Collaborate with immigrants’ rights organizations to challenge these harmful policies.
* Urge federal agencies (including HHS’ OTIP) to adopt comprehensive prevention strategies that protect foreign nationals in the US.
* Support comprehensive immigration reform that includes protections for foreign workers in the US.

1. **Protect Workers from Labor Exploitation:** US guest worker visas create vulnerabilities to abuse and exploitation through their lack of visa portability and transparency. Additionally, agricultural workers and domestic workers are generally exempt from the already inadequate labor protections and oversight that apply to other workplaces in the US. These industries are notoriously rife with labor exploitation and abuse, including labor trafficking of US Citizens and immigrants.

Specifically, FNUSA will work to:

* Support the Visa Transparency Anti-Trafficking Act and oppose legislation that expands and further deregulates guest worker programs.
* Support the Agricultural Worker Program Act of 2019 (S 175/HR 641).

1. **Decriminalization of the Sex Trade:** Criminalization of the sex trade harms and isolates sex workers, making victims of abuse and exploitation (including sex trafficking victims) harder to identify and support, and investigations into human trafficking harder to pursue. Criminalization also creates barriers to success after escaping sex trafficking.

Specifically, FNUSA will work to:

* Opposes legislation and policies that increase policing and penalties for sex workers as well as buyers of the sex trade and third-party advertisers not engaged in trafficking and exploitation.
* Urge federal agencies (including HHS’ OTIP) to adopt comprehensive prevention strategies that support the needs of consensual sex workers.