



Freedom Network USA

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FREEDOM NETWORK USA CRITICIZES HUD FOR UNEXPECTED AND UNEXPLAINED CANCELLATION OF VITAL SERVICES FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS

Following HUD's [unexpected cancellation](#) of its FY19 Specialized Housing and Services for Victims of Human Trafficking housing grant program, Freedom Network USA Executive Director Jean Bruggeman offered this statement:

“A \$16 million HUD program should be providing desperately needed housing and supportive services to support survivors’ recovery from human trafficking. Instead, HUD canceled the funding program this week without warning or explanation. This inexplicable cut is an affront to survivors who are struggling to find a safe, affordable home in which to recover emotionally, physically, psychologically, and financially from human trafficking.

“Trafficking survivors have, by definition, suffered a financial crime. Exploited by recruiters, employers, family members, intimate partners, and pimps, trafficking survivors are left with criminal records, debt, and trauma, and without the credit history and employment records needed to sign a lease and find a well-paid job.

“In recognition of these challenges, Congress created comprehensive legal and social services programs, as well as immigration protections, to ensure that survivors are supported while they work with the justice system. Safe, affordable housing remains one of the most critical needs for survivors. This HUD housing program was designed to address those gaps by providing services to survivors today and creating best practices to expand services in the future.

“Cancelling this program will leave trafficking survivors in precarious, temporary, unsafe housing. Survivors remain vulnerable to re-exploitation while they struggle to meet their basic needs.”

FNUSA, established in 2001, is a coalition of 68 non-governmental organizations and individuals that provide services to, and advocate for the rights of, trafficking survivors in the United States. As the largest network of providers working directly with trafficking survivors in the US, we are uniquely situated to evaluate the impact of US government efforts to address human trafficking, identify challenges, and propose solutions.