



August 31, 2023

The Honorable Members of the 118th Congress
United States House of Representatives | United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

CAPITOL HILL BRIEFING SEPT. 14: Listening to Survivors to Shape Effective Anti-Trafficking Legislation

Dear Honorable Members of the 118th Congress:

As the August recess comes to a close and Congress prepares to return to the Capitol, there's a unique opportunity for expedited legislative action to prevent human trafficking and support vital services for victims and survivors. A summer movie about international child sex trafficking and recent news reports of child labor abuses at workplaces inside the U.S. have generated widespread public awareness and concern.

We invite all congressional offices to attend an important briefing on constructive and effective ways to address human trafficking, presented by those who know best: trafficking survivors themselves. The expertise of those with lived experience must be the foundation for any legislative action.

Join us September 14 at 2:00 p.m. in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing Room (Dirksen 419) for this unique Human Trafficking 101 event to deepen your knowledge of the values and principles that should undergird anti-trafficking legislation.

We urge Congress to resist rushing new and untested methods into legislation this fall in response to public outrage. We encourage you to push forward proven solutions informed by lived experience that address all forms of human trafficking. Two key areas require immediate attention:

Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA):

The bipartisan, bicameral TVPA is widely supported and has formed the overarching framework of the U.S. Government's comprehensive approach to human trafficking for over 20 years. The TVPA authorizes crucial victim service programs through the Departments of Justice (DOJ), Health and Human Services (HHS), and State (DOS). Last year, Congress failed to pass the entire reauthorization (TVPRA) package. This year, Congress should prioritize and accelerate the complete passage of this crucial legislative package. S. 920, the International Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, is ready for Senate floor action. Its House companion is currently being negotiated for reintroduction. Congress must not allow the House TVPRA to be used as a vehicle for harmful additions. For example, Congress should not require the National Human Trafficking Hotline to

report to law enforcement without the consent of the survivor. This would result in distrust of the hotline and discourage survivors from seeking help.

Federal Anti-trafficking Appropriations:

More eyes than ever are watching Congress for action to ensure survivors are protected and have what they need to seek stability and healing. The congressional response to public outrage over trafficking must not be to cut back funding for necessary services. Congress should increase anti-trafficking appropriations for FY 2024, or at the very least, hold funding levels steady.

Congress has a unique opportunity at this moment to show its commitment to combating human trafficking. We urge Members to carefully consider approaches that will benefit all victims and survivors and not create unintentional harm. Please join us September 14 to learn more, or reach out directly at any time.

Sincerely,

Freedom Network USA

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Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST)

Contact: ATEST Director Terry FitzPatrick | terry.fitzpatrick@ATEST-US.org

National Survivor Network

Contact: survivorleadership@CASTLA.org

Freedom Network USA (FNUSA), established in 2001, is the largest coalition of advocates working on human trafficking issues in the United States. Our network includes survivors, legal and social service providers, researchers, and expert consultants. Together with our members on the ground, we envision an anti-trafficking movement where survivors have what they need to thrive, including access to holistic services that are available to all, and all advocates are committed to dismantling harmful systems that create vulnerability. freedomnetworkusa.org

Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking: ATEST is a U.S.-based coalition that advocates for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery around the world. We advocate for lasting solutions to prevent forced labor and sex trafficking, hold perpetrators accountable, ensure justice for victims and empower survivors with tools for recovery. Our collective experience implementing programs in more than 30 U.S. cities and 100 countries provides our coalition with an unparalleled breadth and depth of expertise. endslaveryandtrafficking.org

National Survivor Network: The National Survivor Network is a values-based membership association of survivors of human trafficking from all over the United States and abroad working together using an inclusive, evidence-informed, public health, human rights, harm reduction approach. We are survivors of all forms of human trafficking. Together, we are working to create a world without human trafficking and a movement that is led by survivors. nationalsurvivornetwork.org