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THE SCOURGE OF MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

HON TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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I want to spend some time talking about what I think and believe has become a scourge--a scourge not only in America, but in other parts of the world.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to be in the Ukraine. I was there on some energy issues, and I came in contact with that scourge that I will talk about today.

The Ukraine, because of its location, because of its former Soviet connections, and because of its high poverty, has a problem that a lot of countries do--and that's human trafficking. I'm not talking about people going from one country to another legally or even illegally. I'm talking about people being trafficked to other locations for sex slavery. The Ukraine is just one of many countries where this seems to be occurring.

One scenario is that young Ukrainian women looking for jobs--and people from foreign countries come to the Ukraine--they promise them a job in another country and that they will be paid a lot of money if they will go to this country and work doing whatever. They buy into that. They go to that other country, and they are forced into sex slavery. There, they are in a situation that is awful. Many of them never get out of it. The only way to get out, for some of them, is to get someone else convinced to replace them in this scourge.

The Ukraine is not the only country. It's not even one of the primary countries. But it's just one.

And so I learned about that, and I learned about the situation and what they were doing in the country of Ukraine in trying to educate young girls about this issue and how this was a trap that they could get themselves involved in.

Recently, I had the chance to be in Central America for several reasons. One was about terrorism, narcotics trafficking, drugs, et cetera. But I also came upon a situation in Central America in the nation of Costa Rica that's a little different, but not really that different than what's taking place in Europe and in North Africa, and that is the plight, once again, of sex slavery, sex trafficking.

In all of Costa Rica, there is one shelter for minor sex trafficking victims. It is called Salvando Corazones. If my Spanish is correct, that means ``saving hearts." It's run by an American lady who went down to Costa Rica for other purposes, found this problem, and just decided to stay. Maria is doing, I think, a tremendous job saving hearts. I call her the Mother

Teresa of Central America. Her story is unbelievable--what she is doing to rescue young girls out of this sex slavery, sex trafficking that is taking place domestically in Costa Rica.

So I and Congresswoman *Janice Hahn*, a Democrat from California, spent a Sunday afternoon--it was supposed to be about an hour--talking to these folks at this shelter. We spent the whole afternoon talking to these girls about their plight, what had happened to them, and what Salvando Corazones and Maria are trying to do to treat them and help them get back into a life. Because many of them had no life.

Let me explain it further.

Prostitution in Costa Rica is legal for adults. Minor prostitution is illegal. Prostitution, generally, is legal in Costa Rica. And they attract a lot of foreigners to that country, for a lot of reasons, but this is one reason: for sex tourism. People from other countries and people in Costa Rica take advantage of the legal prostitution system. And that's a debate for Americans to have at another time.

But what occurs is that once that phenomenon starts, it's an easy move for a pimp to sell a child into prostitution. Even though they're working with legal prostitution, which is also sometimes sex slavery, it's easy to move into using children.

And I asked as many people as I could--the people in the government, the people at the shelter--to tell me who these foreigners are that come to this nation for sex tourism. And they all really just told me the same thing: it's Americans. It's primarily Americans--Europeans and other countries as well--for the legal prostitution.

But then you have these young girls that get caught in this system that are sold into trafficking by everybody that comes in contact with them. Sometimes it's their own family members. And so this shelter run by Maria tries to rescue these young girls and salvage their lives and, as the saying goes, save their hearts.

I have a lot of examples. Time doesn't permit for me to go but only an hour. We can't have filibusters in the House of Representatives. But during this hour I just want to mention some of the situations and try to focus on how sex trafficking, human trafficking of children, affects Americans and what may be some things that we need to be aware of. And I have changed all the names of these girls because I respect their privacy.

Abigail was born in Miami. Her father was a Costa Rican. Her mother was from New York. At the age of 5, Mr. Speaker, her father began sexually assaulting her. At 8, she had her first injection of heroin to keep her quiet during sex. She was removed from public school and kept out of school because teachers were getting suspicious.

Then, at the age of 11, she was sent by her father to Costa Rica so he could have her shared with other people. Generally, the family members. She got pregnant twice and decided that if all she was good for was sex and the people who really loved her treated her this way, she might as well turn to prostitution. So she did.

She started when she was 11. She was eventually found at a bus stop, apparently strung out on drugs, barely hanging onto life. She was rescued by this organization and treated with the dignity that she deserved. And the process now is a success story. After she was home-schooled by Maria, she began the healing process. And now she's older, she's sober, and she's married, and a child is on the way. That's a success story of someone that was put into international sex trafficking.

At the age of 5--another 5-year-old--Diana was sold by her mother for a cell phone in Costa Rica. She was sold every week, for over a year, until somebody saw the problem and complained to the government. She was actually raised thinking this was a normal lifestyle for a 5-year-old. The staff at Salvando Corazones rescued her, and they're working with her today. I had the chance to meet her. A remarkable person.

Felicia was raped by her stepfather, gave birth at 13 to her brother's child, and is now pregnant again at 16. She was sold by her stepfather to someone who wanted to put her to work on the streets. Her stepfather thought, this is easy money for me to sell my stepdaughter on the streets of Costa Rica. She recently was rescued and is at this safe house.

Of course, we need to understand that these girls are tough. They're tough victims to work with. If you talk to anybody, including the numerous groups in the United States working especially with these young women, they're hard victims. They're mad at the world. They have a lot of hate and anger. Of course they do. Who wouldn't, being treated this way from a mere infant?

And so I just want to make it clear to Americans that these victims are hard to work with. Understandably, we can see why they are in the situation that they are in.

Why have they become victims? The reason, Mr. Speaker, boils down to one word: demand. There is the demand to abuse these young girls for money. And the demand being money--the pimp sells the girl so he can get money--and the demand being the customer.

There's three people in this scenario. There is the trafficker that goes around trafficking these young women either domestically or internationally. On the other end is the victim. And she is a victim. She is not a criminal. She is not a prostitute. She's forced into this conduct.

But in the center is the person who demands that service and is willing to pay for it. I'm going to spend the rest of my time mentioning the demand and what needs to be done about that.

Beatriz, she was just 14 and was brought to Costa Rica from Nicaragua, an internationally trafficked child, to work in a home, similar to the young lady that I mentioned in the Ukraine--promised a job in another country. She's going to help her family, good person, but she's trapped once she gets into that foreign country and that is not what she's going to get as a job. But that's what she was promised, that you could get a job in Costa Rica. You're from Nicaragua, you're poor, you don't have any money; I've got a job waiting for you in Costa Rica.

So she goes, had the thought of helping her family out, and instead she was trapped into sex trafficking and forced into prostitution. She was sold in hotels, brothels, and luxury condos, and she had to have sex with men up to 17 times a day for money. She was gang-raped by foreigners, she was tortured into compliance by her pimp, and she was drugged so that she would comply. That is slavery, Mr. Speaker, forced slavery in the name of money.

There was a young mother from Mexico named Alma. She came to the

United States to work in 2009. She, like many others who come here looking for a better opportunity, wanted to help her family. She paid a coyote to help her cross the border into my home State of Texas. Her ultimate destination was South Carolina, but the coyote wanted to stop in Houston for some other business. Alma arrived at what she thought was a safe house in my congressional district, in an area of what is called Spring Branch. She later discovered that this wasn't a safe house at all. She said it was a living hell--the home of the leader of a human trafficking ring in Houston, Texas.

Alma and some others that had been trafficked were all told that they had to give the trafficker information, because the information they gave was about their families so the trafficker could hold them for ransom because they were kidnapped. The trafficker made the ransom calls to the families demanding money. The problem was, with Alma, her family had no money. She was held in that safe house as a hostage, in that prison--living hell--and she was sexually assaulted numerous times.

The family, like I said, could not afford to pay any money, and so the trafficker used her as a sex slave. She was sold to customers who had the demand for that activity. Eventually, though, she was arrested, and she was glad she was arrested. Law enforcement did a good job--went after the trafficker, got him, got Alma and rescued her. She believed that she would have been killed or certainly further abused had she not been rescued by the police. Other than the name, it's a real person, real victim, trafficked internationally into the United States.

Unfortunately, many victims are not rescued. Some certainly are not rescued very quickly at all, and they face the daily abuse of being a slave.

Who are the individuals that traffic these victims? Well, they cover a lot of individuals. You have the drug cartels, for example, and the criminal gangs. They traffic young women, and they do it for money as well.

The thing about using a sex slave, there's more money involved in sex slavery than there is bringing drugs into the United States. I mean, you bring drugs into the United States, it's a one-time deal. You get the money. As the bad guy, you're gone, you're captured, you go to prison. I used to be a judge. I sent a lot of them to prison. But with sex slavery, the trafficker has the ability to use the slave more than once, and there's a lot of money. And the risk of what punishment may happen to the trafficker is really less than in selling drugs.

So you have the drug cartels. You have criminal gangs, like the one I mentioned with Alma. You have individuals doing this. You have family members doing this, either trafficking these kids in their own country or moving them to foreign countries.

And it's happening worldwide, Mr. Speaker. It's not just happening in a handful of countries. I don't know the estimate of the number of people human trafficked throughout the world, but the numbers are staggering from what I do hear.

I'd like to mention one other person from Texas. Cheryl grew up in an abusive home. She was sexually and physically abused by her father. Her mother left when Cheryl was young to escape the abuse by this abusive male. So at the age of 12, Cheryl ran away. Some of these victims turn out to start as runaways from home. She began hitchhiking with truck drivers and anyone else that would take her. This led her to end up being with a motorcycle group, a biker club, and she was taken advantage of by those individuals.

One of those individuals became a trafficker. So what happened to her, after she left home at 12, she was forced to dance at a strip club by day, and then at night she was sold on the streets. She was in this world of human trafficking. She was not a criminal; she was a victim. We need to make sure that's understood. She had no idea how to get any help because of the abuse that the trafficker would instill on her if she tried to leave.

It actually happened that she was performing at a strip club and one of the patrons figured out she was not an adult. She was 15 by then, after all these 3 years of abuse. One of the patrons helped her escape.

There's a long road to recovery and restoration, but Cheryl's a survivor, and she has personally founded the Mission at Serenity Ranch to help other victims of human trafficking.

So those are some examples, Mr. Speaker, of some real individuals.

When Ms. *Hahn* and myself were visiting those young girls in Costa Rica, their shelter, like I said, is the only one in the country. It's up in the mountains. It's hard to get to. We complained a little bit--I did--about the rough road, the dirt road going up into the mountain to visit this shelter. After visiting with those girls, we didn't complain anymore about the rain, the roads. When we left, we just thought about those girls. I call them girls because they were girls; they're minors. I believe the youngest one that I talked to that day was 10 and the oldest was 13.

When we left, all we could talk about--we didn't really talk much at all--was about the plight of how here we are in the year 2013, how humanity maybe has progressed in some areas, but in the area of slavery, sex slavery, it's maybe getting worse. It has become a scourge.

So, does it just happen in other places? No, sir, it does not. I've already mentioned Houston. Houston, because of its location, is one of the hubs in the United States for sex trafficking. It's close to the Mexican border, the Gulf of Mexico. It's an international city. Young girls are brought there, and adult women, and trafficked to other parts of the United States.

So what happens? Well, the police will raid a prostitution ring, let's say. They will arrest the trafficker, the pimp. They will arrest the victim, even though, in many cases, she was forced into prostitution. They put the victim in the criminal justice system--usually the juvenile justice system, but it's still the criminal justice system. They go to jail.

And here's one of the reasons why--and I'm not faulting the police, because I know a lot of police officers and a lot of them that work in this area; tough assignment. But, Mr. Speaker, there's no place to put them. There's no place where that police officer can take that 12-year-old trafficked victim that has been forced into prostitution, either domestically or internationally. There is no place to put them at all.

I understand from SPCA that there are about 5,000 animal shelters in the United States. That's great. I have dalmatians. I've gotten dalmatians from Operation Rescue, from a shelter, from the SPCA, so I think that's a good thing that we've got those shelters for animals.

But in the United States, for minor sex trafficking victims, there are 226 beds. That's it. That's all there is. So the police officer often doesn't have a place to take this victim, a minor sex trafficked victim, except put them in jail for their safety and for other purposes.

You can see a lot of problems with putting them in jail. First, they have a criminal record even though they are not a criminal at all. They're forced into this. So that doesn't make them a criminal. That makes them a victim. They have a criminal record. They're put in the criminal justice system. Once they're in the criminal justice system, they stay in the criminal justice system because there's no place to put them.

I will put into the *Record* the statistics I have obtained of the 226 beds for minor sex trafficked victims, where it comes from, different organizations, Shared Hope, et cetera.

Shelters for Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Victims in the U.S.

According to a provider survey conducted by Shared Hope International, ECPAT-USA, and the Protection Project in conjunction with Children at Risk as part of their 2012 National Colloquium on shelters and services, there are 226 beds for domestic minor sex trafficking victims in the U.S.

According to a survey conducted by Polaris Project from January-June 2012, there are 348 beds in the U.S. designated specifically for sex trafficking victims.

There are about 5,000 community animal shelters nationwide according to the ASPCA.

So that is a problem we need to work on--finding places to put them when they are rescued--and having a mindset changed in this country that we as Americans see this situation in three parts:

We see the demand, the customer--I'll get back to that person again in a minute;

But we see this third person as a prostitute, no, but a victim, yes, and treat them as a victim, and we can go a long way helping stop this problem of the scourge of human trafficking.

So I've introduced legislation, bipartisan legislation, with *Carolyn Maloney*, a Democrat. *Carolyn Maloney* has been working on this trafficking issue before I was ever in Congress. But we've introduced the End Sex Trafficking Act, along with *Kay Granger* from Texas, *Rick Nolan*, and *Kristi Noem* in the House. On the Senate side, it's bipartisan as well. Senator *John Cornyn* and Senator *Amy Klobuchar* have the same bill in the Senate.

What does it do? Well, let me mention this. The United States spent about \$25 million in 2010 on domestic antitrafficking. The United States spent \$85 million on international efforts to stop human trafficking. Yes, there is more for international trafficking issues, helping those, than there is in the United States, \$25 million.

That is a number, but in the big scheme of things, what is \$25 million? Well, I understand a Predator costs \$25 million. The United States spent \$25 million teaching pottery classes in Morocco. About \$25 million was given to Pakistan for their schools. I'm just saying how much \$25 million is. It's not a lot of money, but that's how much money was spent in the United States in 2010 on this issue.

So what we want to do is to expand that amount of money. I'll show you how we are going to do it without raising taxpayer money. But specifically talking about the End Sex Trafficking Act that we've introduced.

Here's what the Federal law does. If the trafficker, a bona fide human trafficker gets caught, Federal law is tough. These Federal judges, God bless them, they are really nailing these traffickers, as they should. I mean, they are the scum of the Earth, these people that sell little girls--and boys too--for sex slavery.

On the other end, of course, we are not doing a whole lot to find homes, shelters, for the young girls. But the person that escapes, really, prosecution is the person in the middle--the customer.

So what we have done in this bill, the End Sex Trafficking Act, we are going after the customer, the demand, because as I mentioned earlier, that is the root of all this evil, is that there is the demand for it. All we do is we apply the same Federal laws to the trafficker to the customer--sure there has got to be a Federal nexus. Interstate commerce has got to be involved. We are talking about only Federal cases, we are not talking about State cases--so that the demand is decreased by punishment because, as we all know, we've seen the reports of when a prosecution ring is busted somewhere, not involved in trafficking necessarily, you find out the name of the pimp and how careful we go out of our way to protect the identity of the person that's the customer. Well, those days are going to end if we get this legislation because those customers are going to be able to be punished under the law for buying sex, giving that money to a trafficker to have sex with minor children in the United States. So that's what we do in this bill. The days of "boys being boys," they're gone, hopefully. We can make sure that they are gone by making sure that they're held accountable for the actions that they chose to voluntarily do.

As I mentioned, I used to be a criminal court judge in Texas. If I had my way and I was writing the law the way I thought it would be best to stop the demand, these people who are convicted, they would not only go to jail--you talk about having photographs on the Internet--we would have the photograph of the customer, the person that abused the child that had been sold into sex slavery. That would slow that down. It would slow the demand down if we started publicizing who those people were if they were convicted. If there was no demand, there would be less supply. The demand is the answer, I think, Mr. Speaker, into going in after stopping the scourge on the United States and other countries.

There are over 100 organizations that support this bipartisan legislation. I would like to put the names of these 100 organizations into the *Congressional Record*.

That's the first step: hold a person who buys this girl--this crime--accountable for their conduct.

But let's go back to the victims of the crime. The victims of the crime need help as well. In fact, that should be our first priority, rescuing those victims. I told you about how many shelters there are in the United States, or beds, less than 300 beds for minor sex trafficking victims exclusively. We need places to take these young women primarily and help them regain some life because life had been stolen from them.

How do we do that? I mentioned to you we spend \$25 million a year on domestic sex trafficking victims, about \$85 million a year, foreign countries receive that. We are introducing soon the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. Once again, *Carolyn Maloney* from New York--bipartisan--is the cosponsor in the House. I mention "bipartisan" for a lot of reasons. This is a bipartisan issue. But *Carolyn Maloney*, she and I don't see a lot alike on a lot of issues. I mean, we disagree on a lot of things. We don't even speak the same language. I mean, she's from New York, I'm from Texas. We need an interpreter when we talk to each other.

But this issue it is an American issue. I appreciate the work she's done, and others on both sides, on focusing in on trying to solve this problem. And once again, *John Cornyn* in the Senate is leading the efforts over there.

So what we are going to do on this legislation is try to fix current law, a law that was first originated, I think, by *Chris Smith* from New Jersey years ago.

Let me explain to you the problem with this. When a victim from another country is trafficked into the United States--and let's use a girl, a young girl--because she is from a foreign country, and she is trafficked internationally into the United States--and if she is rescued she is able to receive certain services from Health and Human Services--she can be certified as a human trafficking victim. Once she receives that certification that she is actually a trafficking victim, there are certain services available to her, but only to international victims.

So this law will say, look, we are going to treat international victims, yes, help them, but if it's a domestic victim they're going to be able to receive those same services, and shelters will be able to receive those same services as an international trafficking victim. So once they can obtain certification that they are a trafficking victim, then they can apply and receive those same services as well.

But also we want to be able to have funding for the shelters that we need throughout the country. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to talk to you about raising taxes--that's not the issue--or even taxpayer money.

How are we going to come up with some money for grants for these nonprofits throughout the country that are really doing as good a job as they can but are short on money? Well, let's go back to the courthouse. We have got people that are coming down to the courthouse that are being convicted of being involved in human trafficking. We get the customers involved in punishment, as well as the trafficker.

This legislation would require that these criminals pay rent on the courthouse. They'll pay for the crime that they have committed, the system they have created.

Not just with going off to the penitentiary, the Do Right Hotel, but they are going to pay into a fund--\$5,000 will go into a fund. This fund then will be money that will be open for grants, going through the grant process of the Federal Government, for nonprofit organizations and other organizations, other government entities, to receive for funding to help the victims.

The money is needed. We are spending \$25 million. Let's get some more. Let's punish those criminals, make them pay for it, go to prison, hold them accountable, pay the fine. And, of course, the fine would come after restitution. There will be restitution to the victim. Federal judges know how to do all of those things. Then the money would go into the fund that would go to trafficking victims, similar to the VOCA fund concept that was used or began several years ago where criminals generally in Federal Court pay into a crime victims compensation fund. That money then goes to crime victims. But this would be a special fund that those people convicted of those dastardly crimes would be required to pay into.

That's the basis of the bill. Let's try to get a grip on this issue--hold people accountable, hold the trafficker accountable, hold the person that is the customer accountable, and then rescue the victim and treat her with the dignity that she deserves as a human being and get them out of that slavery that they have been trapped into. We will soon introduce that legislation in the House and in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, this conduct that I have talked about I would hope would concern Americans. As I mentioned, I spent a lot of time at the courthouse in Houston, first as a prosecutor, 22 years as a criminal court judge, saw a lot of victims of crime, a lot of children, a lot of those cases, many of these cases, were crimes that were sexual assault.

Sexual assault cases are a unique type of case, Mr. Speaker. Sexual assault cases against minors have a dramatic impact on the minor. Sexual assault against minors that have been trafficked into slavery, I don't know of anything worse because of the repetition of the crime that is committed against that child.

These traffickers, when they commit these crimes, these assaults, on young women primarily, boys as well, or older adults who are still forced into prostitution, that is a sexual assault, it is a crime. When a person commits the crime of sexual assault against another, it is more than a physical crime. It is a crime where the perpetrator tries to steal the soul, the very life, the very heart of the victim, and sometimes, Mr. Speaker, they are successful.

That is why sexual assault is such a horrific crime, because it goes after the inner being of the victim. That's why it ought to bother us that that occurs. It ought to bother us that what's taking place in other parts of the world--whether it's in Europe, central South America, and in the United States--against children, it ought to make us mad so that we can do something about it and hold people accountable.

Congressman *Jim Costa* and myself--a Democrat from California and I--started the Victims' Rights Caucus several years ago in 2005, bipartisan, to try to help victims of crime. We have a lot of Members on it--almost 100. We are focusing on this issue of minor sex trafficking victims in the United States, and in other countries, to try to get them rescued--to take them to shelters like Mario runs in Central America, the same type.

When Ms. *Hahn* and I were there at this shelter talking to these girls they were happy to see us--really happy to see Ms. *Hahn*. She just has that personality. You know, I'm kind of a grumpy old guy from Texas. They were pleased that somebody actually cared about them, and they made us things. I have a bracelet that a young girl made for me--Ms. *Hahn* has one too. They tied it on our wrist. I get a lot of things. I have 10 grandkids. They make me things. I wear this bracelet for a lot of reasons. One, because a child gave it to me that had just horrible things happen to her in her life.

It is important for us--with all of the issues we've got to deal with here in Congress in the United States--that we get back to some basics about how other people in this country are treated. When they are not treated right we need to be upset about it. In this case, we need to hold people accountable for doing things to kids.

We can do that. We can make things better--treat victims like they're victims, hold criminals accountable, stop the demand for minor sex trafficking by putting those folks in jail, making them pay into a fund that goes to grants that will end up in the hands of shelters that try to help these kids, and some other things.

Awareness is very important. It has been said by a lot of people over the years that when we are judged, either as a Nation, Congress, country, we are not judged by the way we treat important folks, we are not going to be judged by the way we treat the rich, the famous, the powerful.

We are going to be judged by the way we treat the poor, the unfortunate, the elderly, children, and victims of human suffering.

I hope we are judged well.

I hope we see the American conscience raised to a level of: this is important. Children are important in this country, and those who have had bad things happen to them, we're going to be concerned about it and not just walk over, as the Good Book says, on the other side of the road and pass them by.

And that's just the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

American Association of University Women (AAUW), American Bar Association (ABA), Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center, Araminta Freedom Initiative, Attorney General of Texas Greg Abbott, Aware, Inc., Breaking Free, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Child Justice, Inc., Child Welfare League of America, Children's Advocacy Institute-Sacramento, Children's Assessment Center-Houston, Children's Defense Fund, Children at Risk, Council on Church Financial Integrity, County Welfare Directors Association of California, Courtney's House, Covenant House International, Crittenton Services for Children and Families, Division of Indian Work, Erik L. Bauer, Attorney at Law, WA, Empire State Coalition of Youth and Family Services, End Child Prostitution and Trafficking-USA Equality4Women, Equality Now, Florida Coalition Against Trafficking, Foster Family-based Treatment, Association Fraternal Order of Police, Futures Without Violence, Georgia Women For a Change, Inc., Girls for Gender Equity, Give Way to Freedom, Harris County, TX Sheriff Adrian Garcia, Heartland Girls Ranch, Human Rights Project for Girls, Illinois Victims.org, Innocents at Risk, International Association of Chiefs of Police, International Initiative to End Child Labor, Jesse Duplantis Ministries, Jewish Women International, Junior League of Seattle, Lakewood Church, Lauren's Kids, Lutheran Social Services of New England MaleSurvivor, Maryland Human Trafficking Taskforce, Men Can Stop Rape, Minnesota Alliance on Crime, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, Multnomah County, OR Department of Community Justice, Nancy O'Malley, District Attorney, Alameda County, CA, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV), National Association for Children's Behavioral Health, National Association of Council for Children, National Association of County Human Services Administrators,

National Association of Police Organizations, Inc., National CASA Association, National Center for Housing and Child Welfare, National Children's Alliance, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, National District Attorneys Association, National Domestic Violence Hotline, National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), National Network for Youth (NN4Y), National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA), National Organization of Women, National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, New Media Company, New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition NOMI Network, PACE Center for Girls, People Against Violent Crime, Perhaps Kids Meeting Kids Can Make a Difference, Pierce County, WA Coalition Against Trafficking, PROTECT, Sanctuary for Families, Saving Innocence, Sensibilities Prevention Services, Sex Trafficking Survivors United, Shared Hope International, Sheriff Marlin Gusman, Sheriff of New Orleans Sheriff Thomas Dart, Cook County Illinois Sheriff Southeast King County, WA Coalition Against Trafficking, State Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles, Washington District 36, State Senator Sandra L. Pappas, Minnesota District 48 and President of Senate, Street Grace, Susan D. Reed, District Attorney, Bexar County, TX, Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA), Texas CASA, The Advocates for Human Rights, The Center for Children & Youth Justice The Demand Project, The Family Partnership, The Freedom Center of New Orleans, The National Crittenton Foundation, The NYC Association of Runaway, Homeless, and Street-Involved Youth Organizations, The Protection Project, The Women's Center of Tarrant County, The Women's Foundation of Minnesota, To Love Children Educational Foundation International, Inc., Washington Engage, Witness Justice, World Hope International, World Vision International, YouthCare youthSpark/A Future. Not A Past.