THE US RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFIC

A list of federal organizations and government proposals
Human trafficking, now considered the third largest source of profits, affects virtually every country in the world. The Trafficking in Persons Report of 2013 states that out of 27 million victims around the world, only 40,000 have been identified this past year. Many countries have begun to take serious action against human trafficking by establishing anti-human trafficking laws. In 1998, The United States made efforts to combat human trafficking with a government wide anti-trafficking strategy by the Clinton Administration. However, many believed these laws were ineffective and lacked strength. The Trafficking in Persons Act (TVPA) of 2000 and other significant pieces of legislation have since been created, but the number of trafficking victims is still high. Since the TVPA, every state in the US has passed laws criminalizing human trafficking. It is crucial to use these laws and begin to take the next steps in prevention and providing resources for survivors. Since the TVPA, every state in the US has passed laws criminalizing human trafficking.

THE US RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFIC

PITF

THE PRESIDENT’S INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE

PITF was established in 2000 when the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was authorized. It is a cabinet level unit that coordinates federal efforts to combat human trafficking. The Secretary of State is the chairman of the PITF. The task-force also consists of the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Director of Central Intelligence. The PITF is responsible for monitoring and keeping track of the progress made by the US and other countries in the area of trafficking prevention, protection, and assistance to victims, and prosecution against traffickers.

The PITF was established in 2000 when the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was authorized. It is a cabinet level unit that coordinates federal efforts to combat human trafficking. The Secretary of State is the chairman of the PITF. The task-force also consists of the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Director of Central Intelligence. The PITF is responsible for monitoring and keeping track of the progress made by the US and other countries in the area of trafficking prevention, protection, and assistance to victims, and prosecution against traffickers.

The Five-Year Strategic Action Plan

Finalized in Fall 2013, the Five-Year Strategic Action Plan is a combined effort of many agencies throughout federal government committed to improving services for victims of trafficking. The Plan is led by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Justice (DOJ), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Plan outlines 4 goals, 10 objectives, and contains more than 130 associated tasks for victim service improvements that can be achieved over the next 5 years. The four goals are: increase coordination and collaboration, increase awareness, expand access to services and improve outcomes.

Since the TVPA, every state in the US has passed laws criminalizing human trafficking.

For more information on the PITF, please go to http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/reports/pitf/

For more information on the Five-Year Strategic Action Plan, please go to http://bit.ly/112E0LI

---


The Blue Campaign was created in 2010 by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) to combat human trafficking. They are responsible for investigating human trafficking, arresting traffickers, and protecting victims. DHS also provides assistance with immigration to foreign-born victims of human trafficking.

The DHS Blue Campaign website offers helpful tools such as posters to raise awareness, a training video on how to identify human trafficking, and a PSA. The Blue Campaign was redesigned in June 2013 with new ways and resources to spot and report human trafficking.

For more information on the Blue Campaign, please go to https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/blue-campaign

The TVPA was enacted in 2000 to address trafficking in persons by strengthening protection for victims of trafficking, prevention, and prosecution.

The TVPA established the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP). J/TIP is responsible for creating the annual Trafficking in Persons Report.

The TVPA also allows trafficked victims to receive a T-Visa. The individual must admit they were trafficked and press charges against their trafficker in order to receive the T-Visa.

The TVPA was reauthorized through the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) in 2003, 2005 and 2008. It expired again on 2011 and was reauthorized by President Obama on March 7th, 2013.

The TVPA of 2013 secures key federal anti-trafficking programs for the next four years and establishes new partnerships with other countries, adds new protections for human trafficking victims, and also provides new tools to prosecutors to go after the traffickers.

Since the TVPRA of 2013, new protection and services will be offered to gays, lesbians, Native Americans and survivors of human trafficking.

For more information on TVPA, please go to http://www.state.gov/j/tip/laws/
GOODS BY FORCED LABOR

The List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor

Required by the TVPRA of 2005, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has made available a list of goods made by child and slave labor. The DOL’s Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) first published the list in 2009, with new updates in 2010, 2011, and 2012. The List monitors child and forced labor in foreign countries. Therefore, the United States is not included in the goods reported. However, DOL is aware that child and forced labor are present in the US and includes a review on the US as well. Currently, the List has a total of 134 goods from 74 countries that the ILAB believes are produced with child labor or forced labor.

The List consists of four sections: research focus, research methodology, results and analysis, and a discussion on current and new efforts that can help end child and forced labor in goods produced around the world.

For more information, please go to http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/2012TVPRA.pdf

CA DW BILL OF RIGHTS

The California Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights (Waiting to Be Passed)

The California Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights, passed by California Legislatures, is still waiting to be passed by the senate.

The bill provides housekeepers, nannies, and caregivers with overtime pay, meal and rest breaks, and proper living conditions for live-in workers.

The National Domestic Workers Alliance released a report on the working conditions of California’s in-home workforce and found that a quarter of domestic workers worked long hours without breaks, a quarter were paid below the state minimum wage, only 6 percent work for employers who pay into Social Security, 2 percent receive employer-provided health insurance, and more than a third of the workers surveyed had suffered work-related pains in the past year but just over 20 percent were given paid time off to see a doctor.

The National Domestic Workers Alliance is also helping organize campaigns in other states, such as Massachusetts and Oregon.
The New York Domestic Worker’s Bill of Rights

In 2010, New York became the first state to put basic labor protections into effect. 

The law provides domestic workers the right to overtime pay at time-and-a-half after 40 hours of work in a week, or 44 hours for workers who live in their employer’s home, a day of rest (24 hours) every seven days, or overtime pay if they agree to work on that day, three paid days of rest each year after one year of work for the same employer, and protection if sexually abused.

The success of the law took six years of organizing by domestic workers, unions, employers, clergy, and community organizations.

For more information, please go to http://www.labor.ny.gov/legal/domestic-workers-bill-of-rights.shtml

The Hawaii Domestic Worker’s Bill of Rights

In 2013, Hawaii became the second state to pass a domestic workers bill of rights. 

The law, similar to the one passed in New York, makes it illegal for employers to discriminate against workers based on race, gender, orientation, and covers them under state wage and law hours.

The passing of this bill, as well as the one in New York, offers federal labor protections for domestic workers since the New Deal.

For more information on the TIP Report, please go to http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/

The Trafficking in Persons Report

The TIP Report is the U.S. Government’s global analysis of trafficking in persons and a look at how foreign government’s take action to combat human trafficking.

Since 2001, the report has been used to encourage dialogue between countries on anti-trafficking reform and ways to improve prevention, protection, and prosecution programs. It is the most detailed report on human trafficking and is used worldwide.

The TIP Report uses a three-tier system to rank how well countries fulfill the requirements found in the “minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking” in the TVPA. The highest ranking is Tier 1.

The report is issued by the Office to Monitoring and Combating Trafficking in Persons.

Other Federal Government Programs, Policies, Laws, etc.

The Customs and Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Reauthorization Act of 2009. Provisions include the prohibition of importing goods to the United States through human trafficking or forced labor.

Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. Improving the Human Smuggling and Trafficking center by working with foreign governments on alien smuggling and trafficking in persons.


Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform Act of 2000 (CAFRA). Notifies property owners if their property is being used as grounds for human trafficking or forced labor.

This act is important because many employers refuse to acknowledge criminal activity on their property.

For more information, please go to http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/