



Press Releases

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MADIGAN, ATTORNEYS GENERAL CALL ON CONGRESS TO FUND HUMAN TRAFFICKING EFFORTS, AID VICTIMS

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined with her counterparts across the country to urge Congress to fund the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act to better fight human trafficking and protect its victims.

Madigan and 46 other attorneys general sent a letter today to ranking U.S. House and Senate members, urging funding for the programs under the Act that are critical to fighting the growing problem of human trafficking and slavery.

Madigan and the attorneys general said funding programs established under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act will help protect minors who become victims of trafficking, provide prosecutors with more effective tools for prosecuting offenders and fund task forces across the country waging the fight against human trafficking.

“Human trafficking is a sickening reality for innocent children in Illinois and across the country,” Madigan said. “Expanding resources to combat this horrific crime and to allow its young victims to recover and rebuild their lives is critical.”

In Illinois, Attorney General Madigan has fought to increase protections for human trafficking victims. In January, a new law crafted by her office and state Sen. William Delgado will take effect to allow victims who were branded by their trafficker to be reimbursed for the cost of removing the tattoos through the Illinois Crime Victims Compensation Fund.

The new law was passed in response to growing reports of traffickers forcibly tattooing their victims as a brand to serve as a sign of ownership. Removing the brand is seen as a critical step to help victims recover and rebuild their lives.

The law adds branding to the list of expenses covered by the Illinois Crime Victims Compensation Act and requires the victim to seek removal of the tattoo with an authorized or licensed tattoo remover.

Human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world, generating roughly \$32 billion each year. According to a study that analyzed U.S. Department of Justice human trafficking task force cases, 83 percent of sex trafficking victims identified in the United States was comprised of U.S. citizens. The average age that U.S. children are first victimized in the commercial sex industry ranges from 12 to 14.

Many victims are forced to work in prostitution or other areas of the sex industry. Trafficking also occurs in forms of labor exploitation, including as domestic servitude, restaurant work, janitorial work, sweatshop factory work and migrant agricultural work.

Victims often experience severe trauma that requires intensive therapy. Due to the complexity and resource-intensive nature of human trafficking cases, law enforcement and victim services in the U.S. are in tremendous need of funding to support the fight against human trafficking.

Joining Madigan in sending the today’s letter were attorneys general from Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, the Virgin Islands, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

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