

**TACKLING HUMAN TRAFFICKING: ASSESSING  
FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL INFORMATION-  
SHARING EFFORTS**

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**FIELD HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
INTELLIGENCE AND  
COUNTERTERRORISM**

OF THE

**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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## TACKLING HUMAN TRAFFICKING: ASSESSING FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL INFORMA- TION-SHARING EFFORTS

Monday, October 28, 2019

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
AND COUNTERTERRORISM,  
*Greensboro, NC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:05 a.m., Old County Courthouse, 301 West Market Street, Greensboro, North Carolina, Hon. Max Rose (Chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Rose and Walker.

Mr. ROSE. The Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism will come to order.

The subcommittee is meeting today to receive testimony on tackling human trafficking, assessing Federal, State, and local information-sharing efforts.

Before I pass this off to Ranking Member Walker, first of all, thank you for being so hospitable to this New Yorker, and if I may just take a point of privilege and say it has been an incredible honor to serve with Ranking Member Walker.

You all have, I believe, one of if not the best Members of Congress representing you, someone I learned from, someone it is a great privilege and honor to work with, and I think we are certainly making the country a better place.

So thank you for the great privilege of allowing him to keep on coming back.

[The statement of Chairman Rose follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MAX ROSE

OCTOBER 28, 2019

I'm happy to be here in North Carolina—great to be here in your beautiful State. You've treated this New Yorker well. And trust me, it's always nice to leave the District of Columbia. It has been a pleasure serving on the Intelligence and Counterterrorism Subcommittee with my colleague and friend, Ranking Member Mark Walker.

It's so important to get out of the echo chamber of the District of Columbia and hear from people across the country about the problems they face. That's our duty as Members of Congress. Earlier this year, in May, Ranking Member Walker joined me for a field hearing in my district on Staten Island, where we heard from local officials about the terrorism threats facing New York City. Today, we're coming to Ranking Member Walker's neck of the woods to talk about the very serious issue of human trafficking. Today's hearing is entitled "Tackling Human Trafficking: Assessing Federal, State, and Local Information Sharing Efforts."

Today we will hear testimony from witnesses who are on the front lines of the fight against human trafficking here in North Carolina. I don't need to tell anyone that human trafficking is a huge problem. There are an estimated 40.3 million victims of human trafficking world-wide, of which more than 400,000 are believed to live in the United States. That is a horrific statistic. We must do better. A study by Polaris in 2018 showed that one of the biggest risk factors for being trafficked is whether you've recently migrated or relocated. The second biggest risk factor was substance abuse. The biggest takeaway, though, is that there's no one profile that fits a victim of human trafficking, although women and children have a higher risk of being trafficked.

There's no one profile for an individual who participates in trafficking humans. And in the face of such a massive, diverse problem, we really need a whole-of-society approach. From the Department of Homeland Security all the way to local law enforcement, everyone has a part to play. I understand that, in the last decade, the Department of Homeland Security has unified its efforts to fight human trafficking under the Blue Campaign. That includes the work being done by ICE Homeland Security Investigations. I'd like to hear more about the Blue Campaign today—about what's working, what challenges you face, and how Congress might be able to help. I also believe that businesses must play their part too. That's why I support legislation sponsored by my fellow New Yorker, Representative Carolyn Maloney, the Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act. It would force large corporations—any company that makes more than \$100 million a year—to tell Americans, every year, what measures that company has taken to identify and address conditions of forced labor, slavery, human trafficking, and child labor within that company's supply chains.

Today, I want to hear from all of our witnesses about the quality and frequency of information sharing between Federal, State, and local officials. I also want to hear about how some of you may have worked with businesses, here in North Carolina and across the country, to help fight human trafficking from that end as well. Finally, I'd also like to hear what recommendations you might have for Congress—or even for other States, like my home State of New York—to strengthen the fight against human trafficking.

Mr. ROSE. With that, sir, I will recognize you for the opening statement as this is your home territory.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you, Chairman Rose.

We may have to squeeze—get you a little barbecue today before we get back to the District of Columbia. I don't know how New Yorkers do barbecue but we have got a couple ways we do it in North Carolina here.

But it is a privilege to work with you and getting to know you the last couple of years, just your heart to get to, really, the bottom line of these kinds of issues and a lot of experience coming from New York specifically in this area, and I appreciate the opportunity to work—appreciate the opportunity to have you here in New York.

On behalf of my fellow North Carolinians, I would like to welcome all of you today as well as the other Members of the Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism to my home State.

I would also like to thank the Chairman for agreeing to hold this important hearing on human trafficking. I believe this is the first Federal hearing since 1921 here in central North Carolina.

As you all know, human trafficking is a despicable crime that continues to plague the Nation. Before I get into the numbers, I also wanted to take just a moment and acknowledge the incredible work of our armed services in taking out someone who certainly was no stranger to human trafficking and that was al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS.

I applaud, certainly, the administration and specifically the great men and women in Special Forces and other—really, other service men and women who support that to really make a huge difference to eradicate such beings from the planet.

Human trafficking—let us look at a couple numbers here. Since 2018 or in 2018, there were 10,949 human trafficking cases that reported to the National Hotline.

Trafficking occurs in every State across the country. The vast majority relate to sex trafficking and the victims in women or girls.

Sadly, human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States. Our major highway system, our agriculture economy, and a growing number of criminal gangs have increased the prevalence of human trafficking within North Carolina with some cases reported even in our district, and there are some things that I am sure that Sheriff Sam Page from Rockingham County here today with us can testify.

Last year, 287 cases of human trafficking were reported through the hotline in North Carolina, ranking the State tenth in the Nation.

This is a fraction of the cases reported in California, Texas, Florida, and elsewhere, largely due to the efforts made by stakeholders across the State to coordinate efforts, develop training, and partner with victims services providers.

I will tell you there are some wonderful ladies on the back—not the back row but sitting back there that we have worked on several different State-wide occasions that are doing incredible work not just on a State-sponsored thing but a lot of the nonprofits that really make a difference in the lives.

Certainly, much more needs to be done to combat this activity and I am proud that today's hearing can highlight the important work that is going on across North Carolina.

Several State laws have been enacted, which is good, including the permanent creation of the Human Trafficking Commission, which is making annual recommendations to the State legislature on additional authorities, and is working with the State Bureau of Investigation to develop a State-wide training program and best practices for law enforcement.

I have made combating human trafficking a priority in my office from the very first day. I was proud to be the first freshman of the 114th class to pass a bill through the House.

This bill, the Human Trafficking Detection Act of 2015, works to train and inform DHS personnel to do better in detecting and intersecting human traffickers as well as their victims specific to their professional roles as well as the making and the training curricula available to all State, local, and private-sector partners.

I am interested in hearing from our witnesses today about how the implementation of this law has assisted in the cooperation with all levels of government in their efforts.

However, as legislators, we know there is much more that needs to be done and must continue to work in a bipartisan fashion to solve the complex problems related to human trafficking and ensure those on the front lines have the necessary tools that they need.

From talking with victims, advocacy groups, law enforcement, and Government agencies across the State, there is no doubt there is a need and a desire for more coordination, training, public awareness, and victim services.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished panel today and learning about how Congress can even further assist their on-going efforts to combat this international affliction.

This problem is bigger than any one jurisdiction's resources.

Again, I want to thank Chairman Rose and Ms. Jackson Lee for joining us today. I think Ms. Jackson Lee may not be here—we are waiting on that—but for this important hearing.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation for the witnesses both for appearing here today and for the work that you do every day.

Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

[The statement of Ranking Member Walker follows:]

STATEMENT OF HONORABLE MARK WALKER

OCTOBER 28, 2019

On behalf of my fellow North Carolinians, I would like to welcome Chairman Rose and the other Members of the Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism to my home State. I would also like to thank the Chairman for agreeing to hold this important hearing on human trafficking, a despicable crime that continues to plague the Nation.

In 2018, there were 10,949 human trafficking cases were reported through the National hotline. Trafficking occurs in every State across the country. The vast majority relate to sex trafficking and the victims are women and girls.

Sadly, human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes within the United States. Our major highway system, our agricultural economy, and a growing number of criminal gangs have increased the prevalence of human trafficking within North Carolina, with some cases reported in my district.

Last year, 287 cases of human trafficking were reported through the hotline in North Carolina, ranking the State tenth in the Nation. This is a fraction of the cases reported in California, Texas, Florida, and elsewhere, largely due to the efforts made by stakeholders across the State to coordinate efforts, develop training, and partner with victim service providers.

While much more needs to be done to combat this activity, I am proud that today's hearing can highlight the important work that is on-going across North Carolina. Several State laws have been enacted, including the permanent creation of the Human Trafficking Commission, which is making annual recommendations to the State legislature on additional authorities and is working with the State Bureau of Investigation to develop State-wide training programs and best practices for law enforcement.

I have made combatting human trafficking a priority in my time in office. I was proud to be the first freshman of the 114th class to pass a bill through the House. This bill, the Human Trafficking Detection Act of 2015, works to train and inform DHS personnel to better detect and intercept human traffickers and their victims, specific to their professional roles, as well as making the training curricula available to all State, local, and private-sector partners. I am interested in hearing from our witnesses today about how the implementation of this law has assisted in the cooperation with all levels of government in their efforts.

However, as legislators, we know there is so much more that needs to be done. We must continue to work in a bipartisan fashion to solve the complex problems related to human trafficking and ensure those on the front lines have the necessary tools they need. From talking with victims, advocacy groups, law enforcement, and government agencies across the State, there is no doubt that there is a need and desire for more coordination, training, public awareness, and victim services.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished panel and learning about how Congress can assist their on-going efforts to combat this international affliction. The problem is bigger than any one jurisdiction's resources.

Again, I want to thank Chairman Rose and Ms. Jackson Lee for joining me for this important hearing. I also want to express my sincere appreciation for the witnesses, both for appearing here today and for the work you do every day. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, Ranking Member Walker.



Before I pass it back to you just to introduce the witnesses, I would like to just certainly point to a few pieces of legislation I think are of critical importance.

One is sponsored by my fellow New Yorker, Representative Carolyn Maloney, the Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act.

It would force large corporations—any company that makes \$100 million or more a year—to tell Americans every year what measures the company has taken to identify and address conditions of forced labor, slavery, human trafficking, and child labor.

But beyond that, today I am eager to hear from the witnesses as to how we can provide a whole-of-Government, a whole-of-society approach to tackling this incredibly difficult, incredibly complex problem that produces untold levels of sorrow and misery, and I believe communities across the country—I do not think that there is any community in the United States of America that is not in some way, shape, or form dealing with this problem.

Then, in addition, I am also interested to hear from our witnesses today how we can use the tools of law enforcement available to us but also how we can use the public health and social service-based tools available to us as well to not only address this problem and the consequences of it but to also prevent it from arising in the first place.

So with that, Ranking Member, I will pass it back to you again to introduce this exceptional panel of witnesses.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you, Chairman Rose. I appreciate the courtesy of allowing me to introduce this impressive panel who, collectively, I think, together—we added it up—has over a hundred years of public service. We thank you for—each of you for that.

First, we will hear from Ms. Christine Shaw Long. Ms. Long serves as the executive director of the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission for the North Carolina Judicial Branch.

She previously worked and spent 15 years with the Salvation Army of Wake County as the director of Social Ministries. She also served 4 years on the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission and on the Salvation Army's North American Anti-Human Trafficking Council.

In 2017, she was presented with the National Salvation Army Excellence in Social Work award. Ms. Long, thank you for your years of dedicated service to human trafficking victims.

Second, we will hear from Mr. Ronnie Martinez. Mr. Martinez is the special agent in charge of the Charlotte field office for Homeland Security Investigations within the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. Martinez spent over 27 years of law enforcement—has over 27 years of law enforcement experience. Mr. Martinez has also held several leadership positions within HSI, including Missouri, Washington, and California.

Mr. Martinez began his law enforcement career in 1992 with the U.S. Customs Service and served our country in the United States Navy from 1985 to 1989. Thank you for your service, Mr. Martinez, and being here today.

Our third witness is Mr. Carl Wall, the special agent in charge of the Human Trafficking Unit for the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigations.

Special Agent in Charge Wall has worked in numerous local law enforcement positions during his 26-year career.

His prior positions include serving as a Wake County deputy sheriff, North Carolina SBI drug agent, and a DEA task force officer and special agent in charge for the SBI training session. There is a lot of initials there but I think we have got them covered there.

Since 2018, Special Agent Wall has been standing up for the SBI's first Human Trafficking Unit. I appreciate your participation today.

Our final witness today is Colonel Aundrea Azelton. Colonel Azelton is the chief deputy at the Randolph County Sheriff's Office. She is a 24-year law enforcement veteran including 10 years as a detective.

She has worked in both Randolph and Alamance County. I think from what I heard last time that Randolph stole you back from Alamance County. But that is—we may not get into that today.

But Colonel Azelton served as a lead homicide investigator in Randolph County and specialized as a human trafficking investigator in Alamance County before returning to Randolph County as the first female chief deputy.

Thank you all for appearing here today. I look forward to your testimony and I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, Ranking Member.

I would also just like to point out how absolutely beautiful this building is. They don't build stuff like this in New York anymore.

So without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be inserted in the record.

I now ask each witness to summarize his or her statement for 5 minutes, beginning with Ms. Christine Shaw Long.

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE S. LONG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION,  
NORTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL BRANCH**

Ms. LONG. Thank you.

Good morning, Chairman Rose, Ranking Member Walker. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on this critically important topic.

It is an honor to speak on behalf of the many dedicated professionals appointed to the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission.

I currently serve as the executive director and only staff for the commission. Our commission was created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2012 and was reconfigured in 2013 during the passage of our safe harbor law.

The commission consists of 12 appointed members and 3 ex-officio judicial seats. Of the 12 voting members, 4 are appointed by the Governor, 4 by the North Carolina speaker of the House of Representatives, and 4 by the North Carolina president pro tempore of the Senate.

The statutory charge of the commission is summarized as to apply for and receive funding on behalf of the State to fund and

facilitate research, to assist in creating measurement, assessment, and accountability mechanisms, to inform and educate law enforcement personnel, social service providers, and the general public, to suggest new policies, procedures, legislation, and to assist in developing regional response teams or coordinated efforts, and to identify gaps and recommend solutions.

So since 2014, the commission has participated in several State, regional, and National roundtables or compendiums. In addition, we have also invited regional response programs and providers from the mountains to the coast to share trends they are seeing as well as their program strengths and needs.

These experts and many others have given us tremendous insight into gaps across the State and ways to address those gaps.

Additionally, State and National experts as well as survivors have provided key information and advice for potential changes.

Informed by these stakeholders, the Human Trafficking Commission has launched efforts, partnerships, and projects to make steps toward fulfilling our statutory charge.

Some of our successes have been conducting a State-wide multidisciplinary symposium annually for the past 3 years, distribution of \$1.35 million in direct service grants through a one-time State appropriation, mandatory posting of awareness posters in 19,000 locations across the State, and multiple legislative actions that strengthen our law or create remedies for victims.

Although colleagues beside me today will add much more detail regarding the trends being seen across North Carolina, I can tell you that our State continues to see cases of both sex and labor trafficking crossing all demographic lines.

Stories from steadfast providers in the field continue to indicate numerous industries in which cases are being identified and the opioid epidemic continues to further complicate case management and outreach efforts.

While working in the field of human trafficking can be exhausting, I can also speak to how inspirational it is to have dedicated law enforcement, service providers, and community members working alongside each other daily.

I would like to highlight two of the collaborations seen within the State. These examples include Federal, State, and local levels all working in tandem.

First, the process of drafting a State-wide human trafficking resource directory has demonstrated to us that there is, roughly, 24 multi-disciplinary regional response programs, task forces on a local level, or local coalitions working across the State.

These are groups of both government and non-government that are either providing 24/7 response to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, are coordinating providers in order to ensure wrap-around services, or are strategically planning action in areas of their community.

A second partnership example is the North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking, or NCCAHT, as we call it. In its original grassroots form, this organization consisted of committed advocates, law enforcement, and service providers meeting regularly as an informal membership.

These professionals initiated projects aimed at building awareness and response across the State in the earlier days. The collective impact model of NCCAHT was monumental in the establishment of the Human Trafficking Commission and NCCAHT holds a seat on the commission.

Other State-wide projects, research, and grants have also included the commission and NCCAHT as part of their advisory committees, which then continues to enhance the collective impact at both a macro and a micro level in the State.

As you know all too well, large issues such as this one are met with many obstacles. It seems prudent to share some of those challenges facing North Carolina. One main challenge is with State-wide mobilization and action is funding.

The commission is currently staffed with the State appropriation that ends before the fiscal year closes. Not only does the commission need reoccurring funding to continue progress toward its statutory charge, but our State desperately needs a State-funded task force to ensure cases are taken from initial identification to proper and full victim service provision and, finally, to prosecution of the trafficker.

Furthermore, we also believe that it is critical to address prevention efforts and prioritize those in funding as well.

Although many States—although as with many States, another issue facing us is lack of comprehensive services throughout the State.

While we have a few NGO's operating with Federal or State funding, there are still many, many gaps in service provision such as emergency and transitional housing.

In addition, expansion of some services and development of additional specialties such as alternative therapies is a critical piece in the puzzle.

So, in summation, human trafficking is sometimes referred to as a public health, a social justice, human rights, and a public safety issue.

North Carolina recognizes that it will take everyone working together to end this horrific crime. It is vital that we continue these partnerships and collaborations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

We appreciate your interest and look forward to your questions.  
Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Long follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE S. LONG

OCTOBER 28, 2019

Good morning, Chairman Rose, Ranking Member Walker, and Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on this critically important topic. It is an honor to speak on behalf of the many dedicated professionals appointed to the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission. I currently serve as the executive director, and only staff, for the commission. Our commission was created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2012 and was reconfigured in 2013 during the passage of our Safe Harbor Law. Regular meetings, as a permanent commission, began in March 2014.

The commission consists of 12 appointed members and 3 ex-officio judicial seats. Of the 12 voting members, 4 are appointed by the Governor, 4 by the NC Speaker of the House of Representatives, and 4 by the NC President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The statutory charge of the commission is as follows:

1. To apply for and receive funding, on behalf of the State, that will assist in examining and countering the problem of human trafficking in North Carolina;
2. To commission, fund, and facilitate quantitative and qualitative research to explore the specific ways human trafficking is occurring in North Carolina and to assist in creating measurement, assessment, and accountability mechanisms;
3. To contribute to efforts to inform and educate law enforcement personnel, social services providers, and the general public about human trafficking so that traffickers can be prosecuted and victim-survivors can receive appropriate services;
4. To suggest new policies, procedures, or legislation to further the work of eradicating human trafficking and to provide assistance and review with new policies, procedures, and legislation;
5. To assist in developing regional response teams or other coordinated efforts to counter human trafficking at the level of law enforcement, legal services, social services, and nonprofits; and
6. To identify gaps in law enforcement or service provision and recommend solutions.

Since 2014, the commission has participated in several State, regional, and National roundtables, advisory committees, studies, collaboratives, and compendiums.

Throughout the past 4 years, the commission has invited regional response programs and other providers from the mountains to the coast to share trends they are seeing, as well as their program strengths and needs. These experts, and many others, have given us tremendous insight into gaps across the State and ways to address the gaps. Additionally, State and National experts, as well as survivors, have provided key information regarding advice for potential policy changes or emerging practices in the field.

Informed by these stakeholders, the Human Trafficking Commission has launched efforts, partnerships, and projects to make steps toward fulfilling our statutory charge.

Some examples of Commission successes are listed below:

- Establishment of mandatory law enforcement training.
- Conducting State-wide multidisciplinary symposiums annually the past 3 years. The conferences have featured different tracks for professionals across the State using both National speakers and State content experts.
- Distribution of \$1.35 million in direct service grants through a State appropriation. These grants are helping launch and expand the provision of services and response across the State.
- Issuing Standards for Direct Service Providers to use when working with survivors.
- Mandatory posting of an awareness poster in over 19,000 locations across the State.
- Multiple legislative actions to strengthen child sexual exploitation laws, create a civil remedy for victims, create a sex tourism law, and expand post-conviction relief for victims charged with a crime while being trafficked.

Although colleagues beside me today will add much more detail regarding the trends being seen across North Carolina, I can tell you that our State continues to see cases of both sex and labor trafficking crossing all demographic lines. According to reports from the National Human Trafficking Hotline, our State has consistently ranked within the top 10 States for human trafficking. Stories from steadfast providers in the field continue to indicate numerous industries in which cases are being identified and the opioid epidemic continues to further complicate case management and outreach efforts.

While working in the field of anti-human trafficking can be exhausting, I can also speak to how inspirational it is to have dedicated law enforcement, service providers, and community members working alongside each other daily. I would like to highlight 2 of the collaborations seen within the State. These examples include participants from Federal, State, and local levels working in tandem.

First, the process of drafting a State-wide human trafficking resource directory has demonstrated there are roughly 24 multidisciplinary regional response programs, local task forces, or local coalitions working across the State. These are groups of both Government and non-profits that are either providing 24/7 response to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, are coordinating providers in order to ensure wrap-around services for victims, or are strategically planning for action in specific areas of the movement in their communities. While the initial resource directory draft indicates roughly 60 non-governmental organizations (NGO's) involved in the movement, one-third are agencies offering to help victims as part of another program that is not specific to human trafficking and therefore is tailored to another population, such as homelessness, domestic violence, etc.

A second partnership example is the North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking (NCCAHT). In its original grassroots form, this organization consisted of committed advocates, law enforcement, and service providers meeting regularly as an informal membership. These professionals initiated projects aimed at building awareness and response across the State. The collective impact model of NCCAHT was monumental in advocating for the establishment of the Human Trafficking Commission, and NCCAHT holds a seat on the Commission. Other State-wide projects, research, and grants have also included the commission and NCCAHT as part of their advisory committees, which then continues to enhance collective impact at both macro and micro levels.

As you each know all too well, large issues such as this one are met with many obstacles. It seems prudent to share some of the challenges facing North Carolina.

One main challenge for State-wide mobilization and action is funding. The commission is currently staffed with a State appropriation that ends before the fiscal year closes. Not only does the commission need recurring funding to continue progress toward its statutory charge, but our State desperately needs a funded task force to ensure cases are taken from initial identification, to proper and full victim service provision, and finally to prosecution of the trafficker. Furthermore, we believe it is critical that prevention efforts be prioritized for funding.

As with many States, another issue facing us is lack of appropriate, comprehensive services throughout the entire State. While we have a few NGO's operating with Federal funding such as the Office of Victim's Crime grants or with State funding through Governor's Crime Commission grants, there are still gaps in service provision such as emergency and transitional housing. Expansion of such services and development of additional specialties, e.g., alternative therapies, is a critical piece in this puzzle.

Last, data collection is a discussion often brought up as a barrier to preparing adequately for future needs in capacity building, or as a barrier to obtaining funding. Since this is a hidden and complex crime, collecting reliable and unduplicated data from multiple sectors that are each coming into contact with victims is a difficult challenge.

In summation, human trafficking is sometimes referred to as a public health, social justice, human rights, and public safety issue. North Carolina recognizes that it will take everyone working together to end this horrific crime. It is vital that we continue these partnerships and collaborations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. We appreciate your interest and I look forward to answering your questions and to future collaborations with Members of the subcommittee to address this urgent problem.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you for your testimony.

I now recognize Mr. Ronnie Martinez to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF RONNIE A. MARTINEZ, SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE, HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS, CHARLOTTE FIELD OFFICE, U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Chairman Rose.

Good morning, Chairman Rose, Ranking Member Walker. It is an honor to be here to represent Homeland Security Investigations—HSI.

I can attest to HSI's continued commitment to identifying and assisting human trafficking victims and bringing traffickers to justice.

I am particularly pleased to be here as a special agent in charge of the new HSI Charlotte office. On average, HSI conducts 1,000 human trafficking investigations annually.

HSI identifies and assists hundreds of victims and conducts extensive local outreach and training to generate leads.

However, we do not and cannot do this important work alone. HSI participates in more than 120 human trafficking task forces

consisting of Federal, State, and local law enforcement as well as non-Governmental victim service providers.

In North Carolina specifically, HSI participates in 3 task forces in Charlotte, Winston-Salem, and Raleigh, these covering the State's 3 Federal judicial districts.

These task forces have been extremely successful in identifying and dismantling human trafficking networks. Together, with our law enforcement partners we have increased arrests, indictments, prosecutions of traffickers in North Carolina and abroad.

Together with our NGO partners, human trafficking victims have received critical and comprehensive social services.

HSI's human trafficking mission is two-fold: No. 1, to proactively identify cross-border trafficking organizations and minimize the risk they pose to National security and public safety, and No. 2, to employ a victim-centered approach whereby equal value is placed on the identification and stabilization of victims as well as the investigation and prosecution of traffickers.

Law enforcement as a whole is much better at identifying and tackling sex trafficking. However, labor trafficking is just as insidious as sex trafficking but much harder for us to find.

For decades now HSI has been seeing the same types of cases involving agriculture, construction, domestic work, restaurants and massage parlors—essentially, jobs with low pay and fewer legal protections in the underground economy and in the service industry.

When I recently assumed the duty of special agent in charge for North and South Carolina, I learned about a particularly horrendous HSI investigation in North Carolina from 2012.

In 2012, a sex trafficker named Shahid Hassan Muslim forced a 16-year-old to have sex with as many as 12 men per day. After almost a year, she escaped. But in revenge, Muslim tracked her down and held her captive for days while physically assaulting her.

This was also a threat to 5 other young women Muslim was trafficking that same—that the same would happen to them if they had tried to leave him.

A total of 18 minors and young women, both United States citizens and foreign nationals, were identified as victims in this joint investigation by HSI, FBI, and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department.

I chose to illustrate this case today for a few reasons. First, there are trafficking cases that involve the recruiting and smuggling of victims into the United States for the purposes of their exploitation.

However, Muslim's case is one of many where his victims were both United States citizens and were long-time lawfully present immigrants in our communities.

Traffickers will exploit anyone out of greed. Second, criminals, including sex traffickers, are becoming increasingly savvy to use technology to conduct and conceal their insidious activities.

Muslim was prolific in his use in on-line advertising, social media for recruitment, and on-line companies to conceal his movements. HSI is committed to staying on pace with cyber crime investigative strategies. Third, HSI provides victims with an array of referrals for comprehensive services.

As a result, one of the victims now is on a pathway to United States citizenship. Another victim recently graduated from college and her graduation was attended by the case agent and a social worker.

We have seen time and time again that law enforcement officers who work with victim assistance personnel are more stable victim witnesses and stronger investigations.

More importantly, the victims of these nefarious crimes have statistically better chances to rebuild their lives.

I want to thank you for highlighting human trafficking and law enforcement efforts and I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Martinez follows:]

#### STATEMENT OF RONNIE A. MARTINEZ

OCTOBER 28, 2019

##### INTRODUCTION

Chairman Rose, Ranking Member Walker, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the role of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in investigating human traffickers and protecting victims. Fighting all forms of modern-day slavery is one of ICE's top operational goals, specifically to disrupt and dismantle organized human trafficking. As one of 30 special agents in charge, I can attest to the pervasiveness of the crime, as well as the vital role ICE's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) plays in investigating human trafficking crimes, assisting victims, and bringing perpetrators to justice. I am also honored to have our partners in the fight against human trafficking on the panel with me today.

ICE HSI is the leader in combatting transnational criminal organizations engaged in human trafficking. ICE HSI conducts more than 1,000 human trafficking investigations annually, identifies and assists hundreds of victims, conducts extensive local outreach and training to generate leads, and trains foreign law enforcement partners on human trafficking through International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEA). As a lead Federal law enforcement agency responsible for investigating human trafficking, we leverage our global operational apparatus of more than 200 domestic offices and 78 international offices in 52 countries. This global footprint allows HSI to be strategically situated to work with law enforcement partners, as well as non-governmental organizations, which bring human trafficking tips and leads to HSI special agents world-wide.

The mission of our human trafficking investigations is two-fold: (1) To proactively identify cross-border criminal trafficking organizations and prioritize investigations according to the degree of risk posed by each to National security and public safety—HSI targets human trafficking organizations with the goal of disrupting and dismantling the organization and seizing their illegally obtained assets to remove the profit incentive; and (2) to employ a victim-centered approach, where equal value is placed on victim identification and stabilization, as on the investigation and prosecution of traffickers. ICE HSI as an agency is first and foremost concerned with protecting the victim and, therefore, identifying and assisting them is paramount.

To accomplish its anti-trafficking mission, ICE HSI works in close coordination with other components of DHS, law enforcement agencies at the local, Tribal, State, and Federal levels, as well as foreign law enforcement, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), victim service providers, and private industry to protect victims, investigate and prosecute offenders, and prevent trafficking from occurring. ICE HSI Special Agents and Victim Assistance personnel are directly supported by key ICE headquarters programs, including the Human Trafficking Unit (HTU), the Victim Assistance Program (VAP), the Parole and Law Enforcement Programs Unit (PLEPU), the Forced Labor Program, and the Child Exploitation Investigations Unit.

##### STRATEGIC APPROACH TO COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The counter-trafficking strategy ICE HSI employs is rooted in prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership. Our victim-centered approach relies on close coordination with the Victim Assistance Program to connect survivors with service



providers. We seek to aggressively target human traffickers using a comprehensive approach. Our emphasis on partnerships involves significant coordination, outreach, and coalition-building efforts. This strategy is a force multiplier and has paid dividends in successful prosecutions, as well as in identifying and assisting victims.

ICE HSI has dedicated human trafficking investigative groups in each of the special agent in charge field offices with subject-matter experts in outlying offices as well. These specialized agents participate in more than 120 human trafficking task forces Nation-wide consisting of Federal, State, and local law enforcement, as well as victim service providers. Moreover, ICE HSI has participated extensively in the interagency Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team (ACTeam) Initiative, along with the DOJ's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of State (DOS), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, convening Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams in 12 competitively-selected cities to proactively develop and advance significant, high-impact Federal human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. In addition, local law enforcement agencies detail officers to ICE HSI human trafficking groups to work full-time with ICE HSI Special Agents on trafficking investigations.

As part of ICE HSI's Trafficking in Persons Strategy, we also conduct a significant amount of outreach in order to generate leads from the organizations to which victims are likely to trust, confide, and report the crime. Annually, this strategy results in several thousand contacts with other law enforcement, NGO's, and community organizations concerning human trafficking within the United States. This routinely involves hundreds of training/engagement events with NGO's and law enforcement.

ICE HSI has created a new outreach initiative called STOP (Strategic Trafficking Outreach Program) to strategically target industries that have been found to be associated with human trafficking. This new initiative will raise awareness within these industries, identify additional victims that have previously gone unreported, and increase prosecution of traffickers.

ICE HSI is a key partner of the Blue Campaign along with other components, such as U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG). The Blue Campaign is a National awareness campaign to: (1) Educate the public, law enforcement, and other institutions on human trafficking in the United States; and (2) to increase understanding of the indicators of human trafficking, and to appropriately recognize and respond to possible cases of human trafficking. Working in collaboration with first responders, governmental, non-governmental, and private-sector organizations, the Blue Campaign magnifies this important, National public outreach. Additionally, FLETC has developed a new Human Trafficking Awareness Training course, which will be made available to Federal, State, local, Tribal and campus law enforcement Nation-wide to assist ICE HSI in raising much-needed basic awareness of this crime.

In addition to providing basic and advanced training to investigators in the United States, we also provide a substantial amount of international human trafficking training, which is delivered to foreign law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim service providers in collaboration with ICE Attaché offices typically from more than 70 countries annually. Working with DOS, we also coordinate and train at numerous events at ILEAs and U.S. embassies world-wide. The training includes our efforts to combat human trafficking, investigative techniques, bilateral investigations, indicators of human trafficking, victim identification, and victim assistance with a focus on building the capacity to conduct human trafficking investigations with host country authorities.

#### THE GLOBAL SCOPE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign National victims in the United States, and traffickers exploit victims from the United States abroad. Human traffickers and victims can be of any age, race/ethnicity, sex, gender identity, nationality, immigration status, cultural background, socio-economic class, and education attainment level. Traffickers can be relatives, family friends, gang members or associated with transnational criminal organizations, and they can operate alone or in groups. Traffickers use various forms of force, fraud, and coercion to control and exploit victims, including debt bondage, fraudulent employment opportunities, false promises, violence, and threats of violence. Human trafficking occurs in both legal and illegal industries, and may intersect with other criminal activity, such as drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, or money laundering. Though clandestine by nature,

it is an extremely lucrative illicit activity with estimated annual global profits of \$150 billion, according to the International Labour Organization.

#### CHALLENGES TO COMBATTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

To minimize risk and maximize profitability, traffickers work to preserve the clandestine nature of the crime by creating agile networks, adapting to profit and risk environments, and adopting advanced technologies. These characteristics make it difficult to detect and, as a result, difficult to gather quality information. We are constantly working to improve detection of human trafficking cases to make the crime less clandestine and to ensure we are equipped to identify potential victims, traffickers, hot spots, and transportation routes. For example, we've enhanced our training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) to include mandated human trafficking training for new agents.

Immigration status is often perceived to be a barrier to reporting suspected human trafficking. Some victims and/or their service provider/attorney do not call police, file a case, etc., because of fear of deportation/immigration enforcement. A wide range of crimes are unreported or underreported and have become harder to investigate when the victims are immigrants or have limited English proficiency. Foreign national victims are not always aware of their eligibility for certain legal benefits and services. A victim-centered approach requires we have policies and practices in place to protect trafficking victims from being susceptible to removal.

Statistically, there are fewer labor trafficking investigations because of the difficulty in detecting labor trafficking and separating it from other forms of labor exploitation and workplace violations. It can be especially difficult to detect, investigate, and prosecute for a number of reasons, including isolation of the victims, limited sources of corroborating evidence, and challenges in earning the trust of victims in order to elicit their statements. Not all law enforcement is sensitive to a trauma-informed, victim-centered approach, or appreciative of the full spectrum of human trafficking (not just sex trafficking, but labor trafficking as well). Also, many victims do not see themselves as victims. Consistent, survivor-informed training across law enforcement should be standardized (including terminology, typology, etc.) and continually updated, drawing on the expertise offered by survivors themselves.

Law enforcement should also be cognizant that the justice law enforcement seeks for a victim is not always the justice a victim seeks for themselves. It is not just about prosecuting the traffickers. Sometimes victims want to be removed from the situation and stabilized and move on with their life. Not every trafficking victim wants to play a role in holding the trafficker accountable.

We continue to engage with foreign counterparts to develop anti-trafficking strategies in their respective regions.

#### THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Our Victim Assistance Program (VAP) provides overall guidance on victim assistance and is a resource to all ICE programs for training, technical assistance, and monitoring compliance with Federal crime victim assistance statutes and the *Attorney General Guidelines for Victims and Witness Assistance*. VAP is also a critical resource to ICE HSI investigations and the ensuing criminal prosecutions by safeguarding victims' rights and ensuring access to the services to which they are entitled by law, as well as providing the assistance they need so that they can participate actively and fully in the criminal justice system process. VAP personnel respond to victims' issues in a wide range of Federal crimes, including human trafficking, child pornography, child sex tourism, child sex trafficking, white collar crime, and human rights abuses.

HSI Victim Assistance Specialists support our approximately 6,100 Special Agents and train them on victims' rights, immigration relief for foreign national victims, human trafficking, child exploitation, forensic interviewing, and other victim issues. Victim Assistance Specialists also assist victims with resources and service referrals for Federal, State, and local crime victim services, as well as referrals to non-governmental and community-based victim service providers. In addition to assistance for victims, another service provided by the VAP is the Victim Notification Program and hotline, which provides, for those prior victims who register, notifications of the release from incarceration or removal of criminal alien offenders.

Along with the Victim Assistance Specialists, VAP includes Forensic Interview Specialists to conduct legally-defensible, victim-sensitive, fact-finding, forensic interviews, which are developmentally appropriate and take into account the victim's age, language skills, mental health, and learning capacity.

We would like to thank Congress for appropriating \$7.5 million for the expansion of HSI Victim Assistance Program in 2019, which assisted HSI in creating new Vic-

tim Assistance-related positions. The overall expansion resulted in a 400 percent increase of our Forensic Interview program going from 6 to 30 Forensic Interview Specialists, as well as an increase of our Victim Assistance Specialists from 26 to 34 positions Nation-wide.

#### MAKING AN IMPACT

Working closely with its partners, to include prosecutors at the local, State, and Federal levels, ICE HSI has been able to make a significant difference and move forward U.S. counter-trafficking efforts. In the last 2 years, we have initiated nearly 2,000 human trafficking cases, resulting in the identification and assistance of almost 1,000 human trafficking victims and over 3,000 criminal arrests, and 1,200 convictions. In fiscal year 2018, 849 human trafficking cases were initiated, resulting in 1,588 criminal arrests, 833 indictments and 538 convictions. Fiscal year 2019 statistics are still being consolidated and finalized, but preliminary reporting indicates increases from fiscal year 2018 across all 4 of these metrics.

One example of our efforts with Mexico is the cross-border initiatives to target transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) responsible for sex trafficking of Mexican women in the United States. Mexico is the country of origin of the largest number of foreign-born human trafficking victims identified in the United States. In response to numerous Federal investigations and prosecutions of trafficking networks operating across the U.S.-Mexico border, DOJ and DHS launched the U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Human Trafficking Enforcement Initiative to enhance collaboration with Mexican law enforcement counterparts in order to more effectively combat trans-border trafficking threats. Through this initiative, U.S. and Mexican authorities exchange leads and intelligence to dismantle transnational trafficking networks through high-impact prosecutions in both the United States and Mexico.

In addition to coordinating the development of bilateral investigations and prosecutions, DOJ, DHS, and their Mexican law enforcement counterparts engage in extensive exchanges of expertise and case-based mentoring to advance best practices in victim-centered enforcement strategies. The initiative has achieved significant results: U.S. Federal prosecutions of over 170 defendants; Mexican State and Federal prosecution of over 30 associated defendants; extradition of 8 defendants from Mexico to the United States to face charges; identification of and assistance to more than 200 victims; and recovery of over 20 victims' children from the trafficking networks' control. We have coordinated bilateral enforcement actions to apprehend co-conspirators on both sides of the border.

#### IMMIGRATION OPTIONS FOR FOREIGN VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Short- and long-term immigration options assist law enforcement in stabilizing victims, which can lead to improved cooperation with law enforcement and humanitarian relief to victims. ICE HSI can provide Continued Presence (CP) to victims, an important law enforcement tool that allows a "victim of a severe form of trafficking," who may be a potential witness to such trafficking, to remain in the United States to facilitate an investigation or prosecution of human trafficking-related crimes. CP provides for the temporary deferral of removal actions, along with temporary work authorization and potential access to public benefits and services through the Department of Health and Human Services certification process. It also allows victims to remain in the United States while pursuing a civil action against their traffickers.

CP is vital to law enforcement efforts to combat human trafficking. It is a necessary means of stabilizing victims so they can cooperate as witnesses in bringing traffickers to justice. CP may be granted for an initial period of 2 years and may be renewed multiple times for up to 2 years per renewal to facilitate an investigation or prosecution against traffickers. The appropriate application of CP can lead to more successful prosecutions of traffickers and can increase the odds of identifying and rescuing more victims. USCIS can also provide longer-term immigration relief and employment authorization to certain qualifying victims of severe forms of trafficking through T nonimmigrant status, also known as the T visa, and victims of certain qualifying crimes (including human trafficking) through U nonimmigrant status, also known as the U visa. T and U nonimmigrant status are generally granted for 4 years and may be extended in certain circumstances.

#### CONCLUSION

ICE HSI remains committed to utilizing its authorities and resources to arrest human traffickers and identify and assist the victims of this horrific crime. We will build upon the successes of our outreach and victim-centered approach, and share our lessons learned and expertise to expand the global fight against this horrific

crime. We will continue to disrupt and dismantle the criminal organizations engaged in human trafficking until we end the threat that human trafficking poses. Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today and for your continued support of ICE HSI and its law enforcement mission. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you for your testimony.

I now recognize Mr. Carl Wall to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Wall, I hate to interrupt you there but I want to make sure that your mic is working. Is that something that we can check to make sure that doesn't—I know many that is not—

OK. I think we are on. Just speak as much as you can to the mic. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF CARL L. WALL, II, SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE,  
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION,  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING UNIT**

Mr. WALL. OK. Thank you, sir.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you.

Mr. WALL. My name is Carl Wall and I am the special agent in charge of North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation Human Trafficking Unit.

For more than 26 years, I have had the honor of serving North Carolina as a law enforcement officer and the last 21 as a special agent with the SBI.

In 2017, the North Carolina General Assembly gave the SBI original jurisdiction in human trafficking. In 2018, the SBI began efforts to establish a unit to combat human trafficking in North Carolina.

In July of that year, I was assigned as the SAC of the Human Trafficking Unit. My goals were to provide training, both basic and advanced, to identify and support and rescue victims, and identify and bring to justice traffickers, and also to coordinate with local and Federal law enforcement.

Currently, I am the only full-time human investigation or human trafficking agent within our agency. The SBI has lobbied for more agents with the General Assembly.

In our pending State budget, the General Assembly has designated funds for 8 full-time human trafficking agents. If our Governor signs the budget, we will have a full-time unit to serve the citizens of North Carolina.

When I began this position, I had no experience or prior knowledge of human trafficking. I attended every training and conference I could find to learn what human trafficking looks like, especially in our State of North Carolina.

I have also learned from others—other agencies, including the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation—as to what their States do to combat human trafficking.

Many of these agencies exceed North Carolina in resources allocated to combat human trafficking, the understanding of the crime, and the structure of the response.

Many have protocols and excellent working relationships between Federal and State and local agencies to include nongovern-

mental organizations to make human trafficking cases seamless in their investigations and response to victims.

In 2017, as you have pointed out, Ranking Member, North Carolina was ranked from the Polaris Project as being eighth in the Nation with human trafficking tips reported.

That year in 2017, we had 221 cases reported, 149 of them sex-related, 51 of them labor-related. In 2018, there were 287 tips reported. A hundred and ninety-two of them related to sex, 54 related to labor, which ranked us tenth in the Nation.

Although these reports appear to be low, these are just tips reported to Polaris, which were agreed to be shared with law enforcement.

I have learned through active communication with local service providers, A Safe Place in Wilmington, North Carolina, that they alone had serviced over 190 victims in 2018.

So what is the accurate data? It is my belief that the actual numbers are much higher than Polaris reports and as we, as a State, simply don't know the real number of victims in North Carolina; we need to find out.

The SBI's intelligence analyst Ashley Burke was asked to evaluate the number of sex-related advertisements on the internet specific to North Carolina. On just one website—Skip the Games—we discovered that in 2018 there were over 400,000 ads specific to North Carolina.

It is evident that North Carolina, like other States, has a human trafficking issue that law enforcement is behind in effectively combating it.

To date, the Fayetteville Police Department is the only one agency that has a full-time human trafficking unit in the State. They have 4 full-time officers working human trafficking cases and have been extremely successful.

North Carolina is unique as we are still educating officers, chiefs, and sheriffs that human trafficking exists and it is our mission at the SBI to educate and assist them in coordinating investigations and rescuing victims.

At a recent Police Executive Research Forum—the PERF round table—I explained that not everyone in North Carolina recognizes human trafficking and that the victims are truly victims and not suspects in a prostitution case.

I have found that the best way to relate to local law enforcement's misunderstanding of human trafficking is to explain to them from my point of view as a previous drug investigator.

Traffickers are like drug dealers. They are business people. Rather than selling narcotics, their commodity is another human being.

Sadly, people are a commodity that do not have—that they do not have to replenish. Their product doesn't go away when they sell it. They can profit over and over.

During classes that we teach all over the State we make sure to show human trafficking is not just in our most populated areas as some assume, but it is everywhere.

Attached is attachment number 2. It is a map of the State of North Carolina that shows how many ads are specific to each selected city. Even rural communities in North Carolina are not immune from this heinous crime.

When I hear someone say the victim could leave or run at any time they wanted, they are not a victim, I explain to them I have yet to have a victim tell me that they chose to be a prostitute when they grew up. It doesn't happen. These are victims controlled by force, fraud, coercion from the traffickers.

Over the past 15 months, the SBI has conducted over 20 trainings covering 15 counties with more scheduled. In the 15 months, the SBI has gone from conducting approximately 18 human trafficking investigations to having opened 61 cases to date.

We have 14 SBI agents who have volunteered to have a collateral duty in addition to their regular duty to investigate human trafficking, and, of course, this comes as a secondary duty only to their original assignments.

As the SBI moves forward in establishing a full-time human trafficking unit, we continue to train, educate, and conduct proactive investigations. We do this in collaboration and partnerships with local and Federal agencies.

In the past 15 months the SBI has conducted 10 proactive operations in which we have encountered over 45 victims of human trafficking.

With our partnerships and collaborations, we have been able to offer these victims services to get them out of their current situation and we have identified and began to identify and investigate the traffickers and bring them to justice.

Partnerships and collaboration is the only way you can investigate this crime. It is like no other. With law enforcement we must work together with our NGO's to conduct a successful investigation.

It is the only crime that law enforcement needs and relies on others for a successful case. When the SBI began this unit in 2018, the first thing I did was personally go and visit our Federal partners in each area of responsibility.

I met with the RAC of each Homeland Security Investigations Office and explained the SBI's mission and what our goals are. Each office has been more than helpful in assisting the SBI's mission.

I have also met and described our mission to each of the RAC offices with the FBI within North Carolina. They, too, have been very supportive and inclusive.

The Federal agencies have been imperative in the creation and the success of the SBI's current mission.

In each of our human trafficking outreach operations and in most of our investigations there has been a positive interaction with Federal and local law enforcement.

We are here to support each other with the same goals of supporting victims and helping them get out of the life and bring to justice the traffickers.

This partnership is key. We must all share our data and our information because the traffickers know no boundaries. We must work hand-in-hand with our NGO partners and make sure to include them as we move forward in this effort to end human trafficking.

On average, it takes 6 encounters with law enforcement and NGO's to get a victim to understand that their normal is not normal and to show them a better way without a trafficker.

So we all must work diligently and continuously together to make a difference in North Carolina. As we move forward with a full-time human trafficking unit for the SBI, I am proud to lead the charge for our agency.

I am proud to have partners such as HSI and FBI and our local law enforcement as we tackle this hideous crime. In my 26-plus years in law enforcement, I have seen many gruesome crimes.

I have dealt with murderers, rapists, ruthless narcotic organizations. But until this assignment, I had never seen the violence, both physical and mental, the sickness, and the controlling that a trafficker has over a victim.

A victim is another human being. A victim has the potential to be successful, a proactive person to society, and humanity has been taken away by someone else.

The crime of human trafficking has always existed in some form. We must turn our lens of our views as to what it is, where it is, and how we go about changing it.

No longer should we look at these individuals as choosing to sell themselves for sex. They are victims of human trafficking.

In closing, I am proud to be the one to hopefully make a change in human trafficking in North Carolina. I hope in my final years of law enforcement we can see the success that the SBI and all the partners hoped for.

I hope to have a full-time unit that makes a huge impact on this crime. Our number of reported victims will rise and we want those numbers to rise that will show how serious the issue we have.

If the numbers rise, then we know the public, law enforcement, and everyone is seeing the crime for what it really is and not being ignored or misidentified.

Thank you to the Members of the committee for allowing me to testify today and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wall follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARL L. WALL, II

OCTOBER 28, 2019

Good morning, Chairman Bennie Thompson, Ranking Member Mike Rogers, and Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on the issues of human trafficking in North Carolina. It is an honor to speak on behalf of the dedicated professionals of the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (NCSBI). My name is Carl Wall; I am the special agent in charge (SAC) of the NCSBI's Human Trafficking Unit. For more than 26 years I have had the honor of serving North Carolina as a law enforcement officer, the last 21 years as a special agent with the NCSBI. I have held many roles over my career as drug agent, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) task force officer, assistant special agent in charge, and special agent in charge. I was previously the SAC of the SBI's Training Section before this assignment as the SAC of the Human Trafficking Unit.

In 2017, the North Carolina General Assembly gave the NCSBI original jurisdiction of human trafficking investigations. In 2018, the NCSBI began efforts to establish a unit to combat human trafficking in North Carolina. In July of that year I was assigned as the SAC of the Human Trafficking Unit. My goals were to provide training, both basic and advanced to identify, support, and rescue victims, and identify and bring to justice traffickers, and to coordinate with local and Federal law enforcement. Currently, I am the NCSBI's only full-time human trafficking agent. The SBI has lobbied for more agents to the NC General Assembly. In our pending

State budget, the General Assembly has designated funds for 8 full-time human trafficking agents. If our Governor signs the budget, we will have a full-time unit to serve the citizens of North Carolina.

When I began this position, I had no experience with or prior knowledge of human trafficking. I attended every training and conference I could find to learn what human trafficking looks like. I also learned from other agencies including the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation as to what their States do to combat human trafficking. Many of these agencies exceed North Carolina in resources allocated to combat trafficking, understanding of the crime, and structure of response. Many have protocols and excellent working relationships between Federal, State, and local agencies to include Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) to make human trafficking cases seamless in their investigation and response to victims.

In 2017, North Carolina was ranked by the National Human Trafficking hotline (Polaris Project) as being eighth in the Nation for number of human trafficking tips reported. Polaris reported that NC had 221 reported tips, 149 of them sex-related, and 51 labor-related. In 2018 Polaris reported we had 287 tips, 192 of them related to sex trafficking and 54 related to labor trafficking, which ranked us tenth in the Nation for reported tips. Although these reports may appear to be low, these are just the tips reported to Polaris, which were agreed upon to share with law enforcement. I have learned through active communication with a local service provider, A Safe Place in Wilmington, NC that they had reported serving over 190 victims in 2018. So, what is the accurate data? It is my belief that actual numbers are much higher than Polaris reports, and as a State we simply don't know the real number of victims in North Carolina. Our intelligence analyst, Ashley Burke, evaluated the number sex-related advertisements on the internet specific to North Carolina. On just one website (Skip the Games) we discovered that in 2018 there were over 400,000 ads specific to North Carolina. (See Attachment No. 1)

It is evident that North Carolina, like other States, has a human trafficking issue and law enforcement is behind in effectively combatting it. To date, the Fayetteville Police Department is the only agency that has a full-time Human Trafficking Unit. They have 4 full-time officers working human trafficking cases and have been extremely successful. North Carolina is unique, as we are still educating officers, chiefs, and sheriffs that human trafficking exists and it's our mission at the NCSBI to educate and assist them with conducting investigations and rescuing victims. At a recent Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) roundtable, I explained that not everyone in North Carolina recognizes human trafficking and that the victims are truly victims and not suspects in a prostitution case. I have found the best way to relate to the local law enforcement's misunderstanding of human trafficking is to explain to them from my point of view as a previous drug investigator. Traffickers are like drug dealers, they are business people. Rather than selling narcotics, their commodity is another human being. Sadly, people are a commodity that they don't have to replenish; their "product" doesn't go away when they sell it. They can profit over and over.

During classes that we teach all over the State we make sure to show that human trafficking is not just in the most populated areas, as some assume, but everywhere. Attached as Attachment No. 2 (See Attachment No. 2) is a map of the State of North Carolina and how many ads are specific to each selected city. Even the rural communities in North Carolina are not immune from these heinous crimes. When I hear someone say, "the victim could leave or run anytime they want. They're not a victim," I explain, I have never heard a victim say, "I chose to be a prostitute when I grow up." It doesn't happen. They are victims, controlled by force, fraud, or coercion from the traffickers. Over the past 15 months the NCSBI has conducted over 20 trainings covering 15 counties, with more scheduled. In the 15 months the NCSBI has gone from conducting approximately 18 human trafficking investigations to having opened 61 cases to date. We have over 14 NCSBI Agents who volunteer to have a collateral duty of investigating human trafficking investigations. This comes a secondary duty, only after their original assignment is complete, which comes first.

As the NCSBI moves forward in establishing a full-time Human Trafficking Unit we continue to train, educate, and conduct proactive investigations. We do this with collaboration and partnerships with local and Federal agencies. In the past 15 months the NCSBI has conducted 10 proactive operations in which we have encountered 45 victims of human trafficking. With our partnerships and collaboration, we have been able to offer these victims services to get them out of their current situation, and we have identified and began to investigate traffickers to bring them to justice. Partnership and collaboration is the only way you can investigate this crime.



It is like no other; we in law enforcement must work together and with the NGO's to conduct a successful investigation. It is one of the only crimes that law enforcement needs and relies on others for a successful case. When the NCSBI began this unit in 2018 the first thing I did was personally go and visit Federal agency leaders in each Area of Responsibility (AOR). I met with each RAC of Homeland Security Investigations office and explained what the NCSBI's mission was and what our goals are. Each office has been more than helpful in assisting the NCSBI's mission. I also met with and described our mission to each RAC of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) offices in North Carolina. They too have been very supportive and inclusive. Both Federal agencies have been imperative in the creation and success of the NCSBI's mission.

In each of our Human Trafficking outreach operations and in most of our investigations there has been a positive interaction with Federal and local law enforcement. We are here to support each other, with the same goal of supporting victims and helping them get out of "the life" and bring justice to the traffickers. This partnership is key, we must all share our data and information because the traffickers know no boundaries. We must work hand-in-hand with our NGO partners and make sure to include them as we move forward in this effort to end Human Trafficking. On average, it takes 6 encounters with law enforcement and NGO's to get a victim to understand that their normal is not normal and show them a better way of life without a trafficker. So, we all must work vigilantly and continuously together to make a difference in North Carolina.

As we move forward with a full-time Human Trafficking unit for the NCSBI, I am proud to lead the charge from our agency. I am proud to have partners such as HSI and FBI and our local law enforcement as we tackle this hideous crime. In my 26+ years in law enforcement I have seen many gruesome crimes. I have dealt with murderers, rapists, and ruthless narcotic organizations. Until this assignment, I had never seen the violence, both physical and mental, the sickness and the controlling that a trafficker has over a victim. A victim that is another human being, a victim that has the potential to be successful, proactive person to society and their humanity taken away by someone else. The crime of human trafficking has always existed in some form. We must turn the lens of our views as to what it is, where it is, and how we go about changing it. No longer should we look at these individuals as "choosing" to sell themselves for sex, they are victims of human trafficking.

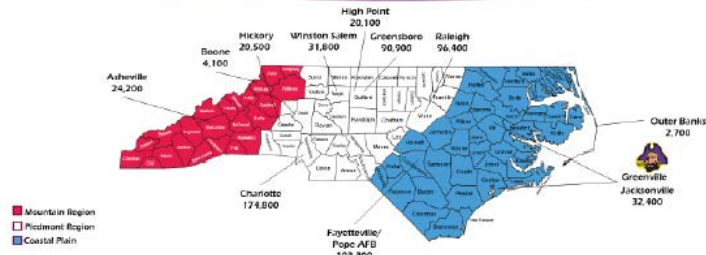
In closing, I am proud to be the one who hopefully can make a change in Human Trafficking in North Carolina. I hope in my final years as a law enforcement officer we can see the success that the NCSBI and all partners hope for. I hope to have a full-time unit that makes a huge impact on this crime. Our number of reported victims will rise, we want them to rise to show the serious issue we have. If the numbers rise, then we know the public, law enforcement, and everyone is seeing this crime for what it really is and not ignoring or misidentifying it.

Thank you to the Members of this committee for allowing me to testify here today.

## Total Ads in North Carolina By Website 2018

- ▶ Backpage: 173,000 (Shut Down in April)
- ▶ Callescott: 1,600
- ▶ Cityvibe: 423
- ▶ Nightshift: 129
- ▶ Adult Look: 12,600
- ▶ Adult Search: 576
- ▶ CityxGuide: 33,100
- ▶ Onebackpage: 6,500
- ▶ Skip The Games: 400,100
- ▶ Mega Personals: 103,500

## Regions and Larger Cities in North Carolina



Mr. ROSE. Thank you for your testimony.  
 I now recognize Colonel, is it? Colonel Aundrea Azelton to summarize her statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF AUNDREA AZELTON, CHIEF DEPUTY,  
 RANDOLPH COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Ms. AZELTON. Good morning, Chairman Max Rose and Ranking Member Walker. It is both an honor and a privilege to testify before you today on this incredibly important issue on behalf of Sher-

iff Greg Seabolt and the many dedicated professionals at the Randolph County Sheriff's Office.

I am Colonel Aundrea Azelton, chief deputy at the Randolph County Sheriff's Office. I am a 24-year law enforcement veteran with 10 years of investigative experience. I wish I were still 24.

[Laughter.]

Ms. AZELTON. In 2016, I left Randolph County Sheriff's Office and went to work as a Special Victims Unit detective in Alamance County.

I was assigned to Sheriff Terry Johnson to work human trafficking cases there. At that time, I had absolutely no experience or training and very little knowledge about human trafficking.

However, I was quickly connected to the Alamance Anti-Human Trafficking Advocacy Council comprised of detectives from local municipalities, assistant district attorneys, an SBI agent, and a representative from the Alamance For Freedom, an NGO focused on the advocacy for human trafficking victims.

Through that council I received knowledge and training that helped me recognize and understand my role and the process necessary to investigate human trafficking and the resources available to trafficking victims. I am by no means an expert in human trafficking investigations.

However, I can testify to the fact that these investigations are complex and, therefore—and there are many forms of human trafficking that I had never before realized were in our communities.

I can also testify that these investigations are beyond the existing expertise or experience of most local agencies in North Carolina without the assistance of the State Bureau of Investigations and/or Homeland Security Investigations and impossible without the collaboration from the district attorney's office and a local NGO.

I left Alamance County and returned to the Randolph County Sheriff's office as the chief deputy in 2018. I will testify that our agency currently lacks the manpower, training, and resources necessary to investigate human trafficking.

We do recognize that while human trafficking may not be widespread in Randolph County, the potential is there and even one trafficking victim in our community is worth the effort to prepare our agency for these investigations.

Human trafficking takes many forms and does not discriminate. Every case is different from the next. Our most vulnerable citizens are being victimized in our communities in plain sight.

These victims commonly come from backgrounds of poverty, domestic abuse, substance abuse, family dysfunction, or simple misfortune that have placed them in a position of vulnerability.

They are targeted by predators that promise something better, often basic needs simply like a place to live. Traffickers use many different techniques to lure, coerce, or force their victims into sexual servitude, the sex trade, or labor. They are very adept at convincing victims to perform whatever acts they have chosen as long as it benefits them.

Traffickers are even more skilled at holding these victims mentally hostage through emotional manipulation. Those powerful manipulations require even more powerful resources to help victims overcome their fears and/or attachments to their traffickers.

NGO's are, therefore, a key to fighting human trafficking. These organizations must have resources and law enforcement must partner with these organizations in order to be able to offer human trafficking victims something better than the life they are living.

These organizations must be on the front end of investigations. Law enforcement cannot wait until they have a human trafficking investigation under way.

It is imperative that they already have a partnership with these organizations and understand the services and resources available to victims if they hope to convince victims to come forward, cooperate with investigations, and testify against their handlers.

Community awareness is equally important. These victims are often living in plain sight among us, not just handcuffed in the basement and, unfortunately, for our community it is necessary that everyone understand that human trafficking is not simply physical captivity but can be and is more likely to be more subtle mental captivity of power, control, and dependence.

Our schools, businesses, churches, and other governmental offices must become partners with law enforcement so they can recognize the indicators of human trafficking and know how to report the suspicion and to whom it should be reported.

It is equally important that we change the mindset of law enforcement to—in regards to trafficking victims. When the term “human trafficking” is mentioned, most people will picture a child or a young woman chained or physically restrained and locked away in a basement.

In actuality, many cases are much more complex and not nearly as clear cut. Many times victims appear to be complicit in crimes that officers or detectives are investigating.

Victims of human trafficking are many times participating in crimes of drug trafficking, prostitution, and frauds. Those victims who are being coerced or deceived into participating are usually unlikely to cooperate with detectives and even less likely to identify as a victim.

They either fear their trafficker, trust their trafficker, or rely on them for their most basic needs or to provide for their addiction.

In some cases, the trafficker is a romantic partner and even a parent. These cases often end with the victim being charged for the crime and never even recognized as a victim.

In cases where victims are identified, the likelihood of the victim being cooperative and testifying against their trafficker is slim.

Human trafficking cases are complex. These cases involve what we classify in law enforcement as a special victim investigation.

However, they also require the resources and longevity of a vice narcotics-style investigation involving tremendous amounts of manpower and sometimes months of investigation.

These cases generally involve technology that requires yet another skill set to properly investigate. In addition, human trafficking does not operate solely within jurisdiction. Victims are moved or operated from county to county, across State lines, and into other countries.

Most counties and municipalities in North Carolina simply do not have the manpower and resources to properly and completely investigate these cases.

Agencies are often overwhelmed with obvious crimes and focused on the current opioid epidemic. It is therefore imperative that human trafficking be investigated from a task force perspective and include partners from local, State, and Federal agencies but also include prosecutors, NGO's, and other service agencies like the Department of Social Services.

Local agencies cannot investigate these cases alone. The first step an agency must take in recognizing—is recognizing that although human trafficking may not be a wide-spread problem in their jurisdiction, even one trafficking victim is too many.

We must make training and education a priority and initiate those necessary partnerships so we know and understand the complexities of investigations, can recognize the indicators of human trafficking, and can be prepared to properly, skillfully, and effectively interact with victims and have services and resources in place to offer them.

It takes a team to bring these cases to fruition. If agencies hope to combat human trafficking in their jurisdictions they must have the support of lawmakers and resources of our State and Federal Government.

The Randolph County Sheriff's Office is, therefore, seeking a task force position with the Department of Homeland Security in an effort to initiate a partnership to combat human trafficking in our community.

On behalf of my agency and potential victims in our county, I thank you all for your willingness to listen, to develop laws to protect victims, and allocate funding to assist agencies like ours in this important crime-fighting endeavor.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Azelton follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AUNDREA AZELTON

OCTOBER 25, 2019

Good morning Chairman Max Rose and distinguished committee Members. It is both an honor and a privilege to testify before you today on this incredibly important issue on behalf of Sheriff Greg Seabolt and the many dedicated professionals at the Randolph County Sheriff's Office. I am Colonel Aundrea Azelton, chief deputy at the Randolph County Sheriff's Office. I am a 24-year law enforcement veteran with 10 years of investigative experience. In 2016, I left Randolph County Sheriff's Office and went to work as a special victims unit detective in Alamance County. I was assigned by Sheriff Terry Johnson to work human trafficking cases there. At that time, I had absolutely no experience or training and very little knowledge about human trafficking. However, I was quickly connected to the Alamance Anti-Human Trafficking Advocacy Council comprised of detectives from local municipalities, assistant district attorneys, an SBI agent, and a representative from Alamance for Freedom, a NGO focused on advocacy for human trafficking victims. Through that council, I received knowledge and training that helped me recognize and understand my role in the process necessary to investigate human trafficking and the resources available to trafficking victims. I am, by no means, an expert in human trafficking investigations, however I can testify to the fact that these investigations are complex and there are many forms of human trafficking that I had never before realized were in our communities. I can also testify that these investigations are beyond the existing expertise or experience of most local agencies in North Carolina without the assistance of the State Bureau of Investigations and/or Homeland Security Investigations and impossible without collaboration from the District Attorney's Office and a local NGO. I left Alamance County and returned to the Randolph County Sheriff's Office as the chief deputy in 2018. I will testify that our agency currently lacks the manpower, training, and resources necessary to investigate human trafficking. We do recognize that while human trafficking may not be wide-spread in

Randolph County, the potential is there and even 1 trafficking victim in our community is worth the effort to prepare our agency for these investigations.

Human trafficking takes many forms and does not discriminate; every case is different from the next. Our most vulnerable citizens are being victimized in our communities in plain sight. These victims commonly come from backgrounds of poverty, domestic abuse, substance abuse, family dysfunction, or simple misfortune that have placed them in a position of vulnerability. They are targeted by predators that promise something better, often basic needs like simply a place to live. Traffickers use many different techniques to lure, coerce, or force their victims into sexual servitude, the sex trade, or labor. They are very adept at convincing victims to perform whatever act they have chosen as long as it benefits them. Traffickers are even more skilled at holding these victims mentally hostage through emotional manipulation. Those powerful manipulations require even more powerful resources to help victims overcome their fears and/or attachments to their traffickers.

NGOs are therefore a key to fighting human trafficking. These organizations must have resources and law enforcement must partner with these organizations in order to be able to offer human trafficking victims something better than the life they are living. These organizations must be on the front end of investigations. Law enforcement cannot wait until they have a human trafficking investigation under way; it is imperative that they already have a partnership with these organizations and understand the services and resources available to victims if they hope to convince victims to come forward, cooperate with investigations, and testify against their handlers.

Community awareness is equally important. These victims are often living in plain sight among us, not just handcuffed in the basement. Unfortunately for our community, it is necessary that everyone understand that human trafficking is not simply physical captivity but can be, and is more likely to be, a more subtle mental captivity of power, control, and dependence. Our schools, businesses, churches, and other governmental offices must become partners with law enforcement so they can recognize the indicators of human trafficking and know how to report the suspicion and to whom should it be reported.

It is equally important that we change the mindset of law enforcement in regards to trafficking victims. When the term human trafficking is mentioned, most people will picture a child or young woman, chained or physically restrained and locked away in a basement. In actuality, many cases are much more complex and not nearly as clear cut. Many times victims appear to be complicit in the crimes that officers or detectives are investigating. Victims of human trafficking are many times participating in crimes of drug trafficking, prostitution, and frauds. Those victims, who are being coerced or deceived into participating, are usually unlikely to cooperate with detectives and are even less likely to self-identify as a victim. They either fear their trafficker, trust their trafficker, or rely on them for their most basic needs or to provide for their addiction. In some cases the trafficker is a romantic partner or even a parent. These cases often end with the victim being charged for the crime and never even recognized as a victim. In cases where victims are identified, the likelihood of the victim being cooperative in testifying against their trafficker is slim.

Human trafficking cases are complex. These cases involve what we classify in law enforcement as special victim investigations, however they require the resources and longevity of a Vice Narcotics-style investigation involving a tremendous amount of manpower and sometimes months of investigation. These cases generally involve technology that requires yet another skill set to properly investigate. In addition, human trafficking does not operate solely within a jurisdiction; victims are moved or operated from county to county, across State lines and into other countries. Most counties and municipalities in North Carolina simply do not have the manpower and resources to properly and completely investigate these cases. Agencies are often overwhelmed with obvious crimes and focused on the current opioid epidemic. It is therefore imperative that human trafficking be investigated from a task force perspective and include partners from local, State, and Federal agencies; but also include prosecutors, NGO's, and other service agencies like the Department of Social Services. Local agencies cannot investigate these cases alone. The first step an agency must take is recognizing that although human trafficking may not be a widespread problem in their jurisdiction, even one trafficking victim is too many. We must make training and education a priority and initiate those necessary partnerships so we know and understand the complexities of investigations, can recognize the indicators of human trafficking, and can be prepared to properly, skillfully, and effectively interact with victims and have services and resources in place to offer them.

It takes a team to bring these cases to fruition. If agencies hope to combat human trafficking in their jurisdictions they must have the support of law makers and the

resources of our State and Federal Government. The Randolph County Sheriff's Office is therefore seeking a task force position with the Department of Homeland Security in an effort to initiate a partnership to combat human trafficking in our community. On behalf of my agency and potential victims in our county, I thank you all for your willingness to listen, to develop laws that protect victims, and allocate funding to assist agencies like ours in this important crime-fighting endeavor.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, Colonel.

I thank all the witnesses for their testimony. I will remind the subcommittee that we each have 5 minutes to question the panel but I am sure we can go beyond that.

I now recognize the Ranking Member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from North Carolina, hometown hero, Mr. Walker, for questions.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you, Chairman Rose.

I think I will start my line of questioning this way. Of all the human trafficking training you have taken—and this is for all of you and let us keep our—if we can keep our answers brief we will get a few more of the questions in—all the training you have taken, whether that it is Government-sponsored or otherwise, including NGO's, and just for people's listening perspective, NGO is basically a non-Governmental organization—what have you found to be the most valuable?

Ms. Long, let me start with you. Of all the training that you have taken, is there something that stands out so this is something that is really working?

Ms. LONG. Thank you, Congressman Walker.

When I think back to the—probably a little over 10 years in working in this area there are so many trainings that I can think of.

You know, initially, I received a lot of trainings internally at the Salvation Army and with some of the different materials they had developed early on to address human trafficking throughout the Nation and then, you know, I think—I think even—I just went last week to the Shared Hope International training in Cincinnati and even I learned so much there even all these years later.

Mr. WALKER. So is it fair to say that some of the—some of the great training is coming from the nonprofits, from the NGO's that are partnering with this? Is that fair to say?

Ms. LONG. Definitely.

Mr. WALKER. All right. Mr. Martinez, would you—same question to you. What is something out there—I guess my question is, as I want people to know, what are some of the things that are being—that are productive when it comes to the training side?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Well, training with HSI, you know, we participate on 120 task forces, and within those task forces we provide training to State and Federal and local agencies.

Participating agencies also have access to our advanced human trafficking training that we conduct at our Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia.

But this is always changing. It is an evolving—it is an evolving crime. So we are always—HSI is always trying to modify and change our training to fit how we do today.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. Wall.

Mr. WALL. Identify just one single training but any training opportunity in which there is a survivor.

I have found in traveling across the East Coast and doing these training events for law enforcement to understand exactly what we are dealing with would be to have a survivor, a former victim, in front of them explaining their situation and how it was that they got into it, how they got out of it, and what their mindset was while in it.

Mr. WALKER. OK.

Ms. Azelton. Colonel.

Ms. AZELTON. I cannot think of one particular training, but there are two components to the training that I have been to that were most impactful.

The first type of training is one that is a multidisciplinary team training, which involves the NGO, the prosecutor, the other members of the task force that you are on or the people that you are working with.

It gets everybody on the same page with these investigations. The second component is training that is victim-centered, that talks about victims and how to help us understand, change our mindset about victims and learn the techniques that we need to build the rapport with them.

Mr. WALKER. OK. Thank you.

Given the—Mr. Wall, direct this one to you—given the intrastate, interstate, and international nature of human trafficking, in many cases across multiple jurisdictions, how does law enforcement across the State deconflict and coordinate cases?

Mr. WALL. Well, right now—

Mr. WALKER. Maybe Mr. Wall, Mr. Martinez, for you guys.

Mr. WALL. Yes. Right now, with our partnership with HSI and with the FBI, anytime we have got a human trafficking case in the State of North Carolina that could cross boundaries for us in a county situation we make sure we coordinate with our Federal partners.

We immediately call our local partners, and right now it is just deconfliction by person and by constant communication.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Martinez, anything to add to that?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Same thing, and we have a headquarters component that does it on a National basis where we contact our offices.

Mr. WALKER. Do you feel like those communications are getting better as far as—

Mr. MARTINEZ. Yes.

Mr. WALKER [continuing]. Back and forth and not the silo operation where we had years ago, back and forth? You feel like there are improvements?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Yes, sir. There is.

Mr. WALL. Yes, sir. I think in this type of crime element, unlike in a narcotics division where you would have silos, I think the understanding is and everybody is sharing the information very well.

Mr. WALKER. As a former pastor and seeing some of this stuff from a distance, there is a psychological component to this as well—an emotional component.



My wife has launched the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and has testified on behalf of the FBI in some of these cases here.

My question is, is law enforcement or the State agencies—is there an equipping going on to handle the sensitivity of these issues?

Colonel Azelton just talked about some of the—not even knowing you are a victim in some of this. So, certainly, there is a criminal aspect to it, and we can talk about raising the penalty levels for the johns and things.

But my part of it, is there someone to bridge the gap, to hold the hand of these victims to be able to walk them through to be able to get the information in a sensitive way that does not create more pressure or more hardships for them?

Ms. Long, would you mind addressing that and maybe Colonel Azelton as well?

Ms. LONG. Sure. I think we are making progress in that area as well. A lot of the training that is conducted across the State and the symposiums we have conducted have included a lot of detail on trauma-informed services, trauma-informed investigations, and victim-centered services.

So I do think we are making progress. We still have—we still have much to do.

Mr. WALKER. Ms. Azelton, did you have anything to add to that?

Ms. AZELTON. In smaller or more rural communities like Randolph County we are still emerging on our victim services and that is for our child advocacy centers, our sexual assault centers.

We do not have those resources. I think that we are on the brink of developing those resources through our family crisis center. But we are not fully developed.

The NGO's, such as Alamance For Freedom like Alamance County has, those are imperative to these investigations because those agencies provide that service to the victims.

Mr. WALKER. I just don't know that people fully understand the complexity of this crime where you can have somebody that is part of the crime but still a victim of the crime, and I am hoping that we can dial this down, too.

I appreciate the Chairman's yielding. I want one more question.

I would like to acknowledge—I believe Sheriff Rogers is here as well today of Guilford County. Thank you for your interest today. As well, we have got some commissioners—Kay Cashion, Commissioner Jeff Phillips, Commissioner Alan Branson. Thank you for being here today.

Panel, what are the most common ways your agencies become aware of a human trafficking case? Let us bring it all the way back down to their—does the majority of cases develop through tips from the National hotline that we talked about or is there some other way that you are getting information on this?

Just, quickly, for the 4 of you and then I am going to yield back to the Chairman.

Ms. Long.

Ms. LONG. Thank you.

You know, I do think we talk often about the National Human Trafficking Hotline and how wonderful it is and their stats are.

But when you talk with the providers on the ground, they are receiving the majority of their referrals from others in their community that they have trained.

So law enforcement, working with them, local coalitions, task forces, homeless shelters they may have trained. So it does seem that that piece of raising awareness is a bigger piece than the hotline.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Martinez.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Certainly, the hotline does provide a lot of tips. But also working with our partners, working other investigations like gang investigations, narcotics, certainly comes from that. So we do see it through that.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Wall.

Mr. WALL. Yes, sir. We would see it from proactive investigations in which we would conduct an operation—an outreach operation.

We develop a lot of cases from that as well as our partners, the NGO's, who are already servicing the victim and they come forward and are ready to move forward with a prosecutorial case.

Mr. WALKER. Colonel.

Ms. AZELTON. During my time in Alamance County, we did get tips from the community and I attribute that to Alamance For Freedom and Sheriff Johnson and some of our partners there did a really good job of awareness in our community.

So we did have tips coming in from the community. In Randolph, where it is not so much a hot topic item, detectives are recognizing the elements of those crimes in crimes that they are currently investigating.

Mr. WALKER. You mentioned an Alamance For Freedom. Is that a group that you worked with directly when you were in Alamance County?

Ms. AZELTON. It was the NGO in Alamance that provided victim advocacy and services—emergency services—to the victims that we encountered.

Mr. WALKER. You had a close relationship in working with them?

Ms. AZELTON. Yes. They were with us at almost every training that we went to—provided training. It was—they were always there for a victim in emergency situations, which was incredible.

They would actually be there when we first encountered them, provide emergency services at the time, placement, and would carry them through with finding a place to go and learn those life skills and we actually have a very inspiring case that I hope to share soon when that case is finished in court.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you, Colonel.

Chairman.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, Ranking Member Walker.

So I want to just, first off, touch on the piece of the internet.

I believe, Mr. Wall, you had mentioned the statistic of 400,000 advertisements, which I find to be an incredibly striking number.

So could each of you walk me through what you are seeing happening on the internet right now in regards to this issue? Then, just as importantly, what have your interactions been with these tech companies, social media companies, and otherwise to work with them to both investigate these cases using these advertise-

ments as leads, and to get these advertisements off of their platforms?

So we will start from reverse order. Colonel.

I understand that there has not been any direct communication with them as well—that we find to be more often the case than otherwise.

Ms. AZELTON. During the time I was focusing on human trafficking investigations in Alamance County a lot of the—I didn't have a lot of interaction with the actual companies in submitting search warrants to certain companies. Sometimes they didn't even respond.

Mr. ROSE. Could you just go with that? Which companies would—

Ms. AZELTON. So there was a particular case where I sent in a subpoena to Google for a Google account and they never responded.

That case I ended up turning over to the task force with HSI and I think they ended up following up on that. But I waited months and months and months with no response to that particular—

Mr. ROSE. Wow. So you sent the subpoena to Google regarding a human trafficking case that was actively occurring and Google didn't even take the time to respond to you?

Ms. AZELTON. That is how it appeared.

Mr. ROSE. That is astounding.

Mr. WALL. Oh. Yes, sir. In dealing with some of these companies it just depends on who they are. Most of these websites are now housed outside the U.S. jurisdiction. They are in foreign countries.

So that is where their servers sit, which is why there is not a lot that we can do as far as law enforcement.

But as far as our interaction with them when depending on who they are, some of them have been very cooperative. They will send us everything because they don't want the heat of law enforcement on them in not responding.

So they will give us anything we need as far as the subpoenas. But what we are seeing on-line that is basically how these operations are working.

Mr. ROSE. So you are telling me that there are on-line marketplaces, for all intents and purposes that—

Mr. WALL. Absolutely.

Mr. ROSE [continuing]. That are operated with servers off-line. But name some of these companies.

Mr. WALL. Skip the Games, Adult Search, City X Guide, One Back Page, Mega Personals. There are over 40 that you could go to right now and we can pull up and you could find anything you wanted.

Mr. ROSE. OK. We would appreciate it if you could just provide us with a list of any of these that you are aware of.

Mr. WALL. Sure.

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Martinez.

Mr. MARTINEZ. The same. As you heard in my opening testimony, the Muslim case utilized the internet to get his victims and people to—that they serviced.

So the internet provides anonymity. I mean, they are always using that platform to get their victims and sell their product.

So that is one thing that—and with my colleagues with issues with getting this information from the tech companies, that is something that whenever we have issues we—our cyber crimes center and headquarters is always providing assistance and getting that type of support.

Mr. ROSE. Well, undoubtedly, we have seen the cases of human trafficking dramatically increase over the last 5 to 10 years. Do we think in part that is due to these companies that are established in these on-line marketplaces?

Mr. MARTINEZ. I would say it could be part of it. I mean, human trafficking is such a clandestine crime where everyday everything is evolving and we are developing new techniques to uncover it.

So that could be part of it, yes.

Mr. ROSE. Ms. Long.

Ms. LONG. I mean, the only thing that I would add to that is that we do know also that apps are used as recruitment and we have seen cases that used Facebook to recruit and help groom victims and, of course, now it is moving away from Facebook so we—but we do hear of cases with Instagram and others.

The commission hasn't had any, you know, direct contact with companies.

Mr. ROSE. So when you talk about apps what you are specifically referring to is social media platforms or are there apps that are dedicated to this type of heinous activity?

Ms. LONG. I would have to defer.

I know the social media platform for sure for recruiting and coercing victims. But do you know of any specific apps that are—yes, I don't either.

Mr. ROSE. OK. All right. Thank you, ma'am.

We can continue with your—all right. Great.

I defer to you again, sir.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you, Chairman.

My condolences go out to the families and friends of the 39 victims found dead last week—some of you may have seen it—in the trailer of a truck in Essex, over in the United Kingdom.

While this is, obviously, out of our jurisdiction, this is, unfortunately, an all-too-familiar situation as there are countless stories of victims, sometimes in the hundreds, being discovered in the back of a trailer in terrible conditions in the United States.

What would be beneficial to law enforcement officers and agencies to be able to better identify and save these victims trafficked in these trailers before it comes to the tragic situation that we experienced in England?

We have seen some of that here in the country and, Mr. Wall, let me start with you. Is there some things there that would be beneficial to law enforcement identified before it gets to that place?

Mr. WALL. Well, of course, and we are working in conjunction with Texas DPS to train our North Carolina State Highway Patrol to identify any vehicles that may be driving up and down the highways such as that.

But it is just getting the word out to the communities, to the law enforcement community and to the public, as to what human trafficking may look like.

I feel like once they see something they will say something, and then we can move forward with it.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Martinez, do you believe that some of our immigrant communities are targeted based on the fear of—sometimes you hear this about deportation—that makes them even less willing to come clear on this? Is this something that you have seen or experienced? Somebody want to address that?

I will start with you, Mr. Martinez.

Mr. MARTINEZ. That is absolutely a problem. Illegal immigrants that are here in the United States are vulnerable and they are being used in trafficking cases because traffickers take advantage of that.

They know that they are being reported to ICE or to officials that they are going to be deported. So that is definitely—

Mr. WALKER. I believe last year you guys made close to 1,600 arrests, I believe, if my numbers are correct on ICE—including ICE and HSI specifically, this human trafficking.

Are those numbers correct as far as you—

Mr. MARTINEZ. The specific numbers—criminal arrests for fiscal year 2018 was close to 16,588 and—

Mr. WALKER. Mm-hmm. We know that the human smuggling and the human trafficking, specifically at our Southern Border, is a continued growing issue.

Immigrants have been tracked from over 60 countries there, and for many of those victims that are paying these coyotes, that payment does not end once they smuggle them inside the border.

Have you guys seen this continued abuse once they cross over into this country where these gang-related are continuing to reap payment, as horrible as that sounds? Is that something that you see and it is continued once they arrive here?

Mr. MARTINEZ. That is correct, sir, and the payments never end and that is the problem they hold over now. They never end. They are always having to pay that payment and that is the abuse.

Mr. WALKER. Let me stay with you, Mr. Martinez. I want to focus a little bit more on how each of your agencies and organizations specifically work just to combat this entire problem.

Does HSI have any human trafficking task forces in North Carolina?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Correct. We have one in Charlotte, one in Winston-Salem, and one in Raleigh.

Mr. WALKER. All right. So if that is the case, how do you determine which local law enforcement partners are selected as task force officers and how does the TFO relationship work to target specifically human trafficking?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Those relationships or those task force officers that come into—to work with us are through dialog and that is through day-to-day interactions with either drug smuggling, crimes, gangs, anything—human trafficking.

So it is dialog with myself as an executive going to the different departments and having dialog with executives and building coalitions so we can have those exchange of resources to better combat human trafficking.

Mr. WALKER. OK.

Mr. Wall, how many rapid response teams currently exist across the State of North Carolina and how many do you think are needed?

Mr. WALL. Currently, I think there are—Christine, help me out—24 or 44. They are in different pockets—the rapid response teams, which are mostly comprised—

Mr. WALKER. Can you unpack that rapid response for the listener today? Please—

Mr. WALL. A rapid response team or multi-discipline team is usually made up of NGO's—nongovernmental organizations—that are there as service providers when law enforcement encounters a human trafficking victim.

It is someone that we rely on to call upon to come to the scene to help rescue that victim, to get them into—whether it is get them to some food, to housing, to get them out of that situation.

North Carolina is not completely covered. I don't know if that number is correct as far as 24 but they are across the State. But we have a lot of counties that are still uncovered with the rapid response team.

Mr. WALKER. So you believe these NGO's are valuable providers or partners with you. Could you do your job without them? Let me just be that point-blank.

Mr. WALL. No. No. Could not do—this crime of human trafficking could not be investigated by law enforcement alone. We must have the partners of the NGO's to do this job.

Mr. WALKER. On the rapid response teams, what is the biggest hurdle to establishing these teams?

Mr. WALL. I think it is—

Mr. WALKER. Ms. Long, I want you—

Mr. WALL. Yes.

Mr. WALKER. I mean Mr. Wall. Then we will come back to Ms. Long.

Mr. WALL. I think it is education. I think it is getting the community to understand what human trafficking is and then finding that passionate person or people within that community that want to stand up a rapid response team and make a difference in their community.

Mr. WALKER. Ms. Long, do you want to add anything to that?

Ms. LONG. Sure, I would, actually.

So we have counted about 24 that are either rapid response teams or maybe they are a task force or a coalition that some of them are not always focused on 24/7 response with the National hotline.

So as far as rapid response teams, there is probably around 11 or 12 of those, and I think part of the most difficult challenge that they face is that these are groups coming together on their time to try to pull together different efforts and organizations.

So I still think to some extent having that State-wide task force or the unit that Special Agent Wall is talking about is needed to help just organize and add that extra additional support into them because they are doing it as collateral support.

Mr. WALKER. A couple more questions, then I will yield back.

Ms. Long, I want to stay with you here. How does the Human Trafficking Commission partner with the DHS Blue Campaign?

Ms. LONG. Yes. You know, we were looking at having the Blue Campaign come about a year ago. We were planning an event to have them come and do a round table, and then due to various budget-related items we had to postpone that.

Then we do have material from the Blue Campaign that we use and take with us different places—tip cards, that sort of thing.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Martinez, my final question is do you know if there is a Homeland Security Information Network Portal for human trafficking, and if there is do you think such a portal code could be helpful in sharing information on human trafficking?

Or is there a different system that you would recommend to use to reach other law enforcement entities about human trafficking trends, best practices and cases?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Yes. Yes. Thank you for your question.

We do. We call it the HSIN, Homeland Security—

Mr. WALKER. Can you repeat that? Called the—

Mr. MARTINEZ. HSIN.

Mr. WALKER. OK.

Mr. MARTINEZ. It is through fusion centers that have communication across the country and able to share strategies and information through that system.

Headquarters also has—our headquarters human trafficking unit has a way to get information out to any of the different offices that we have across the country and share that information that way through our State and local partners, through all across the country.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you.

Chairman.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, sir.

I want to touch on big business for a moment here. We will start with Ms. Long. We will just go on down.

Do we have a sense that big business is complicit in this—that they are aware that, potentially, some of their labor is coming from this?

If not, then what actors in the private sector—what can we be looking to the private sector for here as a partner? Because, certainly, there is some demand here that is being met.

So we have to look at supply. But how can we look at demand?

Ms. Long.

Ms. LONG. I do think to some extent, you know, some big business is aware. Some of the efforts that we have taken to try to help educate and bring awareness is—at our last symposium in 2019 we had a couple of specific workshops on financial crimes investigations related to human trafficking and we had several banks come.

A bank helped sponsor some of that to help kind-of—yes, just further that knowledge and how they can help with investigations.

Then on even a State-wide—a State government platform, I guess, with our Department of Labor, you know, with their housing inspectors that go out and different initiatives that go out they definitely speak as well.

They are looking for things and talk with growers and others in the community about human trafficking as well.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Yes. For Homeland Security Investigations we are starting a new initiative. It is called the STOP Initiative, and

that is the Strategic Trafficking Outreach Program, where we are focusing on industries to inform them, like, an example is the transportation industry airlines and busses and to make that information available to them because we feel, I think, being that this is everywhere, transportation is a key component to that, too, and they need to have that information and they are more than willing to assist.

Mr. WALL. Yes, sir. I do believe that big business is probably involved in it but their awareness of it is probably not—they are not as complicit as you may think.

One of the things that I have seen in my travels the city of Houston is doing a great job in stopping the trafficking within their city by education.

So they have put in mandates that say every bus, every cab, every hotel worker, every restaurant worker within that community has to have some sort of human trafficking education as well as any private business that is doing any business with the city of Houston must sign a contract with them saying that if they have knowledge of any human trafficking within their labor force that their contract can be null and void.

That is just one small example of how, you know, a small—not a small community, but a community can, you know, get the word out and make sure that those businesses are not complicit at all.

Ms. AZELTON. I think that is just another component to these investigations is community awareness. Whether it be through big business, small business, our community has to be aware of what trafficking looks like and who to report it to.

Mr. ROSE. So one more question. I may be a New Yorker, but I am humble.

So what, if anything, do you think are some lessons that North Carolina can teach other States and other localities throughout the country?

Ms. AZELTON. I think we just have a lot to learn. I don't know that there is anything that we can teach anyone else. I think we have to learn from each other.

I think everybody has an experience and knowledge and training that can help each other. We can all work together to make these investigations better.

Mr. WALL. Yes, sir.

I feel like North Carolina, at this point, we are a little behind a lot of the other States that have established this and understood what human trafficking is and standing up task forces and really getting together and pushing forward.

We are at the ground level. So as far as teaching anybody anything, I don't think we are quite there yet. We are still in the learning mode.

But we are moving forward and we are pushing as hard as we can.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Coming new into North Carolina, I have seen from other places across the country is that even this panel you can hear the passion and the dedication to this horrible crime.

You see it in our panel and you can only imagine on the agent level on what they do. I see it. I have seen it everywhere.



So it is my priority to develop great partnerships here in the State of North Carolina.

Ms. LONG. Thank you. I don't know that I have much to add to that. I agree that we are still in a learning mode and working together is kind of how we are making our way through it.

Mr. ROSE. I am certainly noticing the cultural distinctions between New Yorkers and the South. You all are—you don't do yourselves justice.

I think it is—I am extraordinarily impressed by the great work that you are doing and I do thank you for giving me the opportunity to learn from you.

Sir.

Mr. WALKER. Just a couple questions left, Chairman, if I could, please.

I want to—I want to try to figure out are we—are we—I know education is an issue here. But how are we reporting these cases?

How do these victims know to make sure this is the number, this is the place?

I know there is a National hotline. My question is, is it the most effective way for law enforcement to get tips on human trafficking cases.

Mr. Martinez.

Mr. MARTINEZ. You asked earlier what are we doing for the victims once an investigation has developed. HSI has the victim assistance specialist that we have that would go into any investigation and they take the victims and they start the process of stabilization for the victims.

So our victim assistance specialist are constantly doing education. They are out doing trainings and they are having these contacts with the NGO's, and that relationship with the NGO's is an important step, as my colleague said earlier.

Without them, we can't—we can't do what we do. So if there is that relationship with our victim assistance specialist and with our special agents, we are able to get more tips and more victims that come forward with that.

Mr. WALKER. OK. Anybody else want to address that?

Mr. Wall.

Mr. WALL. Yes, sir. I think it comes back to the relationships with law enforcement, with the service providers.

Yes, the Polaris Project and the 1-800 numbers are a great tool. But a lot of these service providers are going to see these victims on the ground level probably before somebody calls that 1-800 number and knowing that a service provider has a law enforcement officer or agency to lean upon and directly call that will serve them properly I think you will see the numbers start to tick up.

Mr. WALKER. Ms. Long, if there is a 12- or 13-year-old young girl, young boy out there, showed up for school that has been a victim of this, how do they find out where they go to make sure their anonymity is protected but also—because these deviant human beings have instilled in their mind that if they say anything—well, first of all, they are the victim and they deserve this.

No. 2, is if they do something—if they haven't already created an addiction problem for them already they have put them in fear of their life. How does that person get that information to you?

Whatever the environment from our schools or hospitals, how do they approach? How do they get this information into the pipeline?

Ms. LONG. Could be—yes, a few different ways, actually. So we do have a law in North Carolina where particularly middle schoolers are supposed to be educated on sex trafficking. So we have a little bit more to develop with that as far as recommending specific materials and curriculum to be used in schools.

But schools are doing this now and the National Human Trafficking Hotline is the number being given that will then reroute them back to the closest NGO in their area providing services.

Of course, if they are a minor as well then Child Protective Services would be involved. Hospitals as well. Atrium Healthcare out of Charlotte has launched an initiative with a tool kit and a three-staff team that is kind-of providing their own rapid response team within the hospital system.

They presented to a committee of ours recently and said they had seen about 127 referrals since March when they began. So their model seems to be working well and we are looking forward to seeing how it continues.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Wall, in your experience, the johns, for lack of a better expression, who I think are abusers in this process as much as anybody, are the penalties stiff enough for these guys—guys and gals, I mean?

Mr. WALL. No, sir. Not at all. No.

If we do a proactive operation, which we do an outreach operation for the females and then one to bring in the males as far as the john cases, as you refer to. That is going to be a misdemeanor. They are going to get a ticket and they are going to walk away.

Mr. WALKER. So let me get this straight.

So you get the trafficker, you have the victim, and you have the johns.

Mr. WALL. That is correct.

Mr. WALKER. In some cases, the victim may end up getting a longer punishment or penalty in the justice system than the actual john. Is that—

Mr. WALL. That is correct.

Mr. WALKER. Is that not just ludicrous?

Mr. WALL. Yes, sir. Hundred percent.

Mr. WALKER. Think about that.

Mr. Martinez, anything you want to weigh in on that in your time and as a—would you agree with Mr. Wall as far as the johns come out of this in a way—much less way than they should be when it comes to the penalty and the punishment?

Mr. MARTINEZ. Oh, absolutely, and victims are scarred for life. It is something they carry with them forever.

So that has no comparison. I totally agree.

Mr. WALKER. Just let me keep pushing on this. Help me understand this because I want to make sure we get this.

Do the johns know when they go to these places or portals or sites that the victims they are encountering, whether it be young men or young women, do they know these people are being trafficked?

Mr. WALL. It is my opinion—again, back to my statement, I think they have to know. I think deep down they don't want to be-

lieve that and they want to think that this person is here of their free will since they are calling them and they meet them alone.

But a rational human being, even though he is trying to buy sex, has got to think is this really what this person has chosen to do—did she walk in this room freely or he walk in this room freely at their own free will and choosing to do this?

Mr. WALKER. What creates a spike in this in our communities? What is it that you see that drives this at different seasons, different times? What is it that drives a spike into this?

Mr. WALL. I think it is seasons. It is events. It is—

Mr. WALKER. Like sporting events and things?

Mr. WALL. Absolutely. You got sporting events. We just had the State Fair, the furniture market here in North Carolina, the MBA All-Star that we had. When you see the Super Bowl, there is always a spike.

So anywhere you have a large contingent of predominantly male individuals with excess money in a combined location away from home, I think you are going to see a spiked increase.

Mr. WALKER. Ms. Long, going back to the earlier question, if you believe there were stricter enforcement penalties and punishment on these johns, do you think that would help deter some of these crimes?

Ms. LONG. I do. I do think so, and I have—just last week we learned about some States who are changing those penalties and are making maybe the second offense a felony—you know, the first a misdemeanor, the second a felony. And so that is something we are very interested in our legislative committee looking into.

Mr. WALKER. Well, as I wrap up here today, I know the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign that conducts education outreach on human trafficking, they have sent us some samples of their materials—they are on the front desk—if that is helpful to any of your organizations.

Let me say thank you to the panel. I can tell the emotion that, as difficult as this is, that you are still moved and that speaks to me.

I would also like to thank all the NGO's that are present. I know we are on a Federal witness hearing here. But let me say I view that as a ministry and a calling.

Thank you to our other local law enforcement, our Guilford County commissioners, and then to also Chairman Rose, who was California to New York to North Carolina yesterday and getting in Raleigh about midnight and driving over and coming to our home State.

North Carolina is proud to have you here and we thank you for your time and your concern in allowing us to have this hearing here in North Carolina.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, sir. You know, in this era of extraordinary hyper partisanship, it is an honor to work with you each and every day.

So with that, I do thank the witnesses for their valuable testimony and the Members for their questions.

The Members of the subcommittee may have additional questions for the witnesses and we ask that you respond expeditiously in writing to those questions.

One thing I can think of is that subpoena you mentioned.  
Without objection, the committee record shall be kept open for 10  
days.  
Hearing no further business, the subcommittee stands adjourned.  
[Whereupon, at 10:25 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

