

*Protecting Ohio's Families*



Ohio Attorney General's Office

**2015**

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

**ANNUAL REPORT**



**MIKE DEWINE**  
★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

**OHIO HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING  
COMMISSION**



# MIKE DEWINE

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

January 25, 2016

Dear Fellow Ohioans,

In 2015, the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission worked diligently to fight the terrible crime of human trafficking in Ohio. With assistance from my office, the group spent the past year focusing on expanding its membership to include business and community leaders from varied professional backgrounds; helped produce a continuing legal education program for the Columbus Bar Association on current legislation and trends in both sex and labor trafficking; and funded programs that work with human trafficking victims.

The Commission also focused on increasing communications between law enforcement and the general public. The Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force - part of the Ohio Attorney General's Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC) - presented at one of the Commission's quarterly meetings on techniques used for handling human trafficking cases in the Central Ohio area. In the past year, the Central Ohio Task Force identified 148 potential victims of human trafficking who were either rescued or referred to social services for assistance. They also received 152 calls containing tips on potential cases of human trafficking in the Central Ohio area.

I am also pleased to report that the newly formed Cincinnati Human Trafficking Task Force has been up and running since April 2015. This Task Force is being led by the Cincinnati Police Department in collaboration with OOCIC, the FBI, the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, the Hamilton County Prosecutor's Office, and the Salvation Army of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. I am proud of the work that these Task Forces have undertaken, as well as the progress that local law enforcement is making across the state to combat dealing in human lives.

As we look forward to 2016, I would like to thank the members of our Human Trafficking Commission for their continued dedication and hard work. Criminals who abuse and manipulate their victims operate in the dark, hoping to never be exposed for what they really are. However, as we continue to educate and empower Ohioans to learn about human trafficking, we can bring these criminals into the light and hold them accountable for their actions. I look forward to continuing this work and I challenge you to join us in our efforts to end the abuse of human trafficking.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine  
Ohio Attorney General

## **Human Trafficking Commission Activities**

In 2015, the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission began meeting on a quarterly basis. Each meeting focused on a different topic area related to human trafficking awareness and education in Ohio. The Commission is made up of six subcommittees which focus on individual as well as collaborative efforts to end the demand for trafficking in Ohio and provide improved services to the victims and survivors. Subcommittee members heard from speakers from many different professions including business, law enforcement, and health care.

### **Law Enforcement Subcommittee**

The Law Enforcement Subcommittee is comprised of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers and agency representatives. The subcommittee continues to monitor the training needs for law enforcement officers in the state on human trafficking matters, and in 2015 members of the subcommittee contributed to the development of the curriculum for the training of law enforcement officers through the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy. Members of the subcommittee also continued to educate the public and other law enforcement officers on the needs of human trafficking victims as well as investigative methods for best ensuring that human trafficking offenders are brought to justice.

The subcommittee monitors law enforcement efforts throughout the state. Law enforcement efforts in Ohio have been productive as victims of human trafficking continue to be rescued around the state. One important task the subcommittee facilitates is law enforcement's sharing of information related to human trafficking investigations. The multi-jurisdictional aspect of these investigations makes sharing information crucial. The subcommittee will continue to facilitate interagency sharing and make contacts among those law enforcement officers investigating human trafficking in Ohio. Similarly, the subcommittee will explore other opportunities for collaborative efforts to ensure the most effective law enforcement efforts.

Looking forward to 2016, in addition to facilitating and supporting training and interagency communication, the subcommittee will work with other members of the Human Trafficking Commission to explore ways to support the establishment of human trafficking law enforcement tasks forces around Ohio.

### **Legal & Legislative Subcommittee**

Ensuring that law enforcement and the justice system effectively carry out new state laws and policies is crucial to combating human trafficking in Ohio. For this reason, the Legal and Legislative Subcommittee focused on monitoring the implementation of House Bill 262 – Safe Harbor Act of 2012 and House Bill 130 – End Demand Act of 2014. It is important that the Ohio General Assembly work closely with the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission and the Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force to identify strengths and weaknesses in state

human trafficking laws. This is why the subcommittee convened in the fall of 2015 to discuss House Bill 283, sponsored by State Representative Teresa Fedor and House Bill 268, sponsored by State Representatives David Hall and Jonathan Dever of the 131<sup>st</sup> General Assembly as well as the Seventh Annual Ohio Human Trafficking Awareness Day, scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 14, 2016, at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus. At this meeting, subcommittee members were asked to comment on the proposed language of both bills and make recommendations. Further meetings will be scheduled to continue the conversation on this legislation.

The Legal and Legislative Subcommittee reported that the state of Ohio made gains in the 2014 state ratings on human trafficking laws, released from Shared Hope International, a leading organization in the fight against modern-day slavery. Ohio received 78 out of 100 points – up 5.5 points from its grade of 72.5 in 2013. With the recent passage of House Bill 130, the End Demand Act, Ohio saw gains in the scored areas of, “Criminalization of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, Criminal Provisions for Traffickers, and Protective Provisions for Child Victims.”

## **Prevention, Education, & Awareness Subcommittee**

Over the past year, the Prevention, Education, and Awareness Subcommittee continued to focus its efforts on developing education guidelines for youth on the issue of human trafficking. *Educating Ohio Youth about Human Trafficking: Policy Guidance and Model Program*, is nearing completion after several years of research and deliberation. The document does not mandate specific curricula or education programs, but is a distillation of best practices and insights from a wide range of prevention programs, experts, and educators. Early in 2016, the document will be shared with the full Commission and educators across the state to receive further feedback and refinement. Pilot education programs using the guidelines will be evaluated during the 2016-2017 school year.

In addition to the youth education work, subcommittee members are spearheading several other initiatives, including: 1) conducting human trafficking training for medical professionals, focusing on those who deal with children; 2) development of a program to increase awareness among Ohio businesses in the private and professional sectors, trade associations, and industries that could become key stakeholders in the fight against human trafficking; 3) coordinating a human trafficking education and awareness plan for the Cleveland area centered around the upcoming Republican National Convention; and 4) serving on the advisory board of the National Educators to Stop Trafficking (NEST) which focuses on issues related to pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade human trafficking education across the United States.

## **Research & Analysis Subcommittee**

In 2015, the Research and Analysis Subcommittee worked on completing the City Reports project. These reports were originally started after the completion of the statewide Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Report. The intent of these individual reports was to take the information that had been gathered and identified on a state level and break it down into useable information for the major

cities in Ohio. The subcommittee wanted to provide detailed information regarding the experience of individuals involved in the sex trade. The subcommittee collected a history from each individual specifically asking about the circumstances in their lives that led them to work in the sex trade. The research revealed that the most common risk factors experienced by those in the sex trade were homelessness, childhood abuse, and having an older boyfriend or girlfriend. The reports have been delivered to the chairs of the human trafficking coalitions in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Toledo. The analyzed data contained in the reports is expected to be used in future reports, grant proposals, and/or to show the need to obtain resources in their community.

The subcommittee has also been working to bring universities together from across the state. Several universities are conducting research on a variety of different topics surrounding human trafficking in Ohio and around the world. Recognizing the importance of collaboration and the sharing of information, the Ohio General Assembly recently passed the following language:

***SECTION 369.620.** Not later than January 31, 2016, the Human Trafficking and Social Justice Institute of the University of Toledo, in conjunction with other state universities, shall develop and submit to the General Assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code, the Governor, and the Chancellor of Higher Education, a plan that outlines how state universities can work with federal, state, and local officials and other organizations and groups to respond to the global problem of human trafficking. The plan shall include methods to ensure that university-level research, legal information, and educational programs are available statewide.*

The research proposal, referenced above, is being developed and will soon be released. Once the proposal is finalized, the project will begin and should be completed by June 2016. This project is a collaboration between the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission, the Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, and the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

## **Demand Reduction Subcommittee**

The Demand Reduction Subcommittee works to reduce the culture of tolerance for, and economic advantage of, forced labor and compelled commercial sexual activity in Ohio.

The subcommittee examines ways to work with, support, and empower local anti-human trafficking groups that are working with the public to incorporate demand reduction into their programming. This includes elevating awareness of, and access to, resources about:

- intervention with potential customers and traffickers, and
- community-wide education and awareness related to reducing the desire and opportunity (demand) for forced labor and compelled commercial activity.

During this year, two subcommittee documents were completed and posted to the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission's web page, [www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking](http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking).

Click "Publications", or direct links to the documents are copied below.

Demand Reduction: White Paper

<http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files/Publications-for-Victims/Demand-Reduction-White-Paper.aspx>

Demand Reduction: Conversation Piece

<http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files/Publications-for-Victims/Demand-Reduction-Conversation-Piece.aspx>

The subcommittee is completing a brochure "Staying safe: Reducing risk for sex trafficking victimization." The audience for this publication is the general population of young people (potential victims and their peer group) and adults who interact with that population.

Future work will focus on the completion of the Ohio Johns School Summary and the development of slide presentation templates. These presentations will include an overview of the demand reduction/primary prevention topic and will provide more in-depth information on how to work with men and boys in prevention education. These topics also apply to labor trafficking, labor exploitation, fair trade, and supply chain transparency.

The subcommittee also will work with the Prevention, Education, and Awareness Subcommittee to coordinate statewide human trafficking prevention efforts, including planning and hosting a statewide educational event.

## **Victim Services Subcommittee**

In 2015, the Victim Services Subcommittee focused on building Ohio's capacity to identify victims and support survivors through services and community support. A primary goal was to increase the availability of 24-hour emergency response for human trafficking victims throughout the state. In keeping with Ohio's strategy of building local response networks through human trafficking coalitions, efforts to improve emergency response capacity centered on strengthening and increasing human trafficking coalitions.

As of December 2015, 21 human trafficking coalitions exist in Ohio. To date, 63 of Ohio's 88 counties are included in human trafficking coalitions. Additional outreach, networking and capacity building are taking place in the counties that are not currently part of a coalition.

One significant step forward in building Ohio's human trafficking coalition capacity was the hosting of Ohio's first conference focused on enhancing the work of human trafficking coalitions. The event, Enhancing Ohio's Frontline Response to Human Trafficking, was attended by human trafficking coalition and child advocacy center leaders. Participants learned about Ohio's safe harbor efforts, working with the media, utilizing the state human trafficking data collection tool, working with the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, effectively serving foreign born persons and labor trafficking victims, and building a continuum of care for human trafficking victims and survivors in local communities. The conference was organized by the Office of the State Human Trafficking Coordinator at the Office of Criminal Justice Services, Ohio Department of Public Safety, in partnership with the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission and local coalitions.

In October 2015, several members of the subcommittee, in collaboration with Advocating Opportunity, produced a Continuing Legal Education program for the Columbus Bar Association entitled "Using the Law to Fight Human Trafficking." This day-long program focused on educating lawyers on current legislation and trends in both sex and labor trafficking. Participants walked away with a greater awareness and knowledge as well as many new connections with local lawyers and prosecutors already working on this issue. The subcommittee plans to take this training to other bar associations across the state in 2016.

Having examined gaps, challenges and unmet needs in Ohio's human trafficking response systems, the Victim Services Subcommittee established the following goals for 2016:

- 1) Create simple and easily accessible tools to help coalitions build capacity and effectiveness. Based on conversations with Ohio's emerging coalitions, it is apparent that local communities need access to tools, resources, and strategies to build a comprehensive anti-trafficking effort. The Victim Services Subcommittee will create guides on how to get started with building a coalition, how to recruit and maintain coalition members, how to foster collaboration within a coalition, and how to encourage participation in Ohio's human trafficking data collection tool. Additional guides will highlight examples of effective coalition strategies.
- 2) Visit all of Ohio's coalitions in 2016, to build relationships, learn about effective strategies and identify barriers and challenges. Small teams from the Victim Services Subcommittee will visit each coalition in Ohio during 2016. Themes that emerge from the visits will be compiled and shared with key stakeholders to increase support for coalition efforts.
- 3) Update the Child Response Protocol. In 2013, a group of anti-trafficking advocates from around Ohio met with the Victim Services Subcommittee to develop a protocol for responding to child victims of human trafficking. Since that time, new developments such as the growth of safe harbor programs and increased access to legal assistance have changed the landscape. The Victim Services Subcommittee will convene a subcommittee to review and update this protocol.

4) Update Ohio's human trafficking service standards. Initially developed by Ohio advocates in 2010 and updated in 2013, the Standards for Services to Trafficked Persons provide guidelines for providers of trafficking specific services for survivors. The standards highlight the ethical, media, and program standards recommended for any organization providing services to trafficked persons. In light of the growth of services and providers in Ohio, the Victim Services Subcommittee will update the tool again in 2016.

## **Law Enforcement Updates**

In 2015, local law enforcement agencies reported more potential human trafficking investigations and arrests than ever before. The Ohio Attorney General's Office provides law enforcement with training through the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, investigative resources through the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, and collects local law enforcement human trafficking data to help the public understand the scope of the problem in Ohio. Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine continues to dedicate resources to ensure that law enforcement has the tools necessary to investigate human trafficking cases.

## **Local Law Enforcement Human Trafficking Statistics**

House Bill 262, passed in 2012, requires local law enforcement to collect data on human trafficking investigations and forward this information to the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). According to the data collected in 2015, law enforcement reported 102 human trafficking investigations leading to 104 arrests and 33 successful criminal convictions.

In October, the owners of several central Ohio massage parlors were sent to prison after being convicted on multiple charges related to human trafficking. The case was investigated by members of the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, which is part of the Ohio Attorney General's Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC). The case came to light after area residents submitted to law enforcement tips that workers at the massage parlors were living at the businesses and selling sex. Investigators found that the owners were bringing women in from China with promises of jobs and then forcing them into slavery.

In November, a 38-year-old northeast Ohio man was sentenced to more than 27 years in federal prison after a Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force investigation showed he had been harboring a 17-year-old girl in a motel room in Whitehall and taking sexually explicit photos of her to post on the Internet. The victim said she had been in a relationship with the man since she was 15. The jury convicted the man of production of child pornography.

Law enforcement agencies also reported the numbers of potential victims, traffickers, and buyers/johns they identified over the past year. The human trafficking victims who most often came



to the attention of the law enforcement, over the past year, were largely young, white adults who were victims of sex trafficking. There were 203 potential victims of human trafficking identified, with 196 being female, three being male and four having no gender specified. Of the potential victims, three were aged 12 and under, four were aged 13, 23 were 14-15 years old, 30 were 16-17 years old, 16 were 18-20 years old, 57 were 21-29 years old, 29 were 30-40 years old, 32 were 41-59 years old, and one was aged 60-84. Eight of the potential victims did not have an age listed. Seventy-nine victims were identified as white, 45 victims were listed as black, 46 victims listed as Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Native Alaskan, and 33 of the potential victims did not have an ethnicity listed.

Though the majority of the suspected cases included in the law enforcement data were sex trafficking, law enforcement did identify six potential labor trafficking victims. Of the potential labor trafficking victims, one was identified as white and five did not list an ethnicity. Of the potential victims, one was aged 13, two were 16-17 years old, and three were 30-40 years old.

Over the past year, law enforcement identified 130 suspected traffickers, including 129 potential sex traffickers and one potential labor traffickers. Of the suspected traffickers 74 were identified as black, 26 were identified as white, 23 were identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, with seven traffickers having no ethnicity identified. Of the potential offenders identified, two were 16-17 years old, nine were 18-20 years old, 44 were 21-29 years old, 29 were 30-40 years old, 24 were 41-59 years old, and two were 60-84. Twenty of the potential traffickers had no age listed. Of the potential traffickers, 88 were identified as male, 32 were identified as female, and 10 did not identify a gender.

The number of suspected consumers or buyers/johns identified by law enforcement in 2015 was 192, the vast majority of which were identified as potential consumers of sex trafficking (167). There were 109 consumers identified as white, 32 identified as black, one identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, and 50 did not list an ethnicity. Only 90 potential consumers had an age listed. Five of the potential labor consumers were identified as 30-40 years old, 15 consumers were 41-59, and 5 were aged 60-84. Two potential consumers of sex trafficking were 21-29 years old, 15 were 30-40 years old, 47 were 41-59 years old, one was aged 60-84, and 102 had no age specified. There were 160 consumers identified as males, none were identified as females, and 32 did not identify a gender.

Trafficking can involve movement of victims across cities, states or the country. Law enforcement identified a motor vehicle as the method of transportation in 144 cases and in 25 cases an airplane was identified as the method of transportation. In 17 cases, law enforcement listed the method of transportation as “other” than motor vehicle, airplane or watercraft. In 21 cases, the method of transportation was listed as “non-applicable,” which most likely means that the case did not involve known transportation.

Finally, law enforcement agencies were asked to categorize the social and/or economic factors leading the victim to be trafficked. In 40 cases, law enforcement identified the underlying risk factor as “runaway and homeless youth.” In 22 cases, “truancy” was listed as a risk factor. The majority of

cases that reported risk factors identified “drug/alcohol/other dependency” (72 cases). It is unclear whether the dependency existed before the suspected trafficking or during. Sixty-one cases listed “oppressed, marginalized, and/or impoverished” as an identified risk factor, and 36 cases listed “other factors.”

## **Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force**

The Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force was created by the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission as a law enforcement collaborative to investigate human trafficking cases in the Central Ohio area. The Task Force was announced in August 2012 and is primarily composed of those with BCI, the Columbus Police Department, the Powell Police Department, the Delaware County Sheriff’s Office, The Franklin County Prosecutor’s Office, Homeland Security Investigations, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the US Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Ohio, and the Delaware County Prosecutor’s Office in partnership with the Salvation Army of Central Ohio.

The Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force provides victim-centered law enforcement efforts throughout the central Ohio area to combat human trafficking. In 2015, the Task Force referred 94 potential victims to social services, rescued 54 potential victims, and received and processed 152 human trafficking-related tips.

## **Cincinnati Human Trafficking Task Force**

The Cincinnati Human Trafficking Task Force was created in April 2015 through a collaboration between the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission and the Cincinnati Police Department. Several other agencies participate in the task force including the FBI, the Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office, the Hamilton County Prosecutor’s Office, and the Salvation Army of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. The task force recently appointed a commander and is working on investigating and prosecuting cases in Southern Ohio. Since its inception the Cincinnati Task Force referred 67 potential victims to social services, rescued 5 potential victims, and received and processed 32 human trafficking-related tips.

## **Law Enforcement Training**

The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) actively trains local law enforcement to identify and investigate cases of human trafficking in Ohio. The Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission implemented the “Missing and Human Trafficking” course as a part of the basic training curriculum in response to The Safe Harbor Law, which requires all new Peace Officers to receive human trafficking training. This will ensure that all law enforcement officers are armed with awareness about human trafficking and tools on how to investigate these crimes.

In 2015, a total of 4,146 Ohio Peace Officers took part in and completed human trafficking training through OPOTA. Out of this total, 1,492 were new Peace Officers who completed the human trafficking course as a part of their basic training. There were 2,615 current Peace Officers who completed the human trafficking course made available through the online classroom of OPOTA. And 39 officers completed the advanced, in-person human trafficking training at the OPOTA training facility. The public can view these online courses by visiting: [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking) under the “Online Human Trafficking Training” tab.

## **Conclusion**

Ohio continues to lead the way as a model state in the fight against human trafficking. With the continued growth of local, anti-human trafficking coalitions and the ever expanding network of the Ohio Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Commission, there are few people in Ohio who remain unaware of the reality of human trafficking. By increasing the number of law enforcement officers trained in human trafficking and by expanding human trafficking task forces across the state, we will continue to see more traffickers brought to justice and more victims recovered. Through collaboration between concerned citizens, social service providers, public officials, law enforcement, and other professionals, we can continue to make a difference for thousands of vulnerable Ohioans.



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Ohio Attorney General's Office  
Programs and Development  
30 E. Broad St., 17th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

614-728-7275



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[www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov)