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Human Trafficking Commission Meeting

150 E. Gay Street, 18th Floor,
Columbus, Ohio
August 15, 2011

In attendance:

Attorney General Mike DeWine
Melinda Sykes, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Stephen Schumaker, Deputy Attorney General for Law Enforcement
Rep. Theresa Fedor, Ohio House of Representatives
Sen. Timothy Grendell, Ohio Senate
Gene Kelly, Buckeye State Sheriff's Association
Dr. Jeff Barrows, Gracehaven
Michelle Hannan, Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition
Crystal Allen, Public Children Service Association of Ohio
Emily Pelphrey, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Brent Currence, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Vicki Germann, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Erin Michel, NASW – Ohio Chapter
William Hicks, Ohio Department of Mental Health
Brooke Boswell, Senator Jim Hughes' Office
Marta Mudri, Office of Representative Fedor
Debra Seltzer, Ohio Department of Health
Rachel Adkins, Ohio Department of Health
Brian Moskowitz, ICE/Homeland Security
Dan Brown, US Attorney, SD Ohio
Columbus Dispatch
John Murphy, Ohio Prosecuting Attorney's Association
Melinda Kuebler, Lorain County Sexual Assault Unit
Marlene Carson, Rahab's Hideaway
Rachel Buccicone, Gongwer
Rocky Nelson, OCIC
Kristin Strobel, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Matt Helbert, OCIC
Danielle Smith, NASW – OH
Gene Jarvi, Ohio State Highway Patrol
Jeff Reynolds, Ohio State Highway Patrol
Tereasa Moorman Jamison, Ohio Department of Mental Health
Aaron Dennis, Columbus Police Department
Pete Swartz, Toledo Police
Jake Hardie, FBI Task Force Toledo
Mussa Farah, Horn of Africa Community Center
Jai Chabria, Governor's Office
Lilleana Cavanaugh, OCHLA
Mark Moretti, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Celia Williamson, Lucas County Human Trafficking Coalition

Benito Lucio, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
John Murphy, Ohio Prosecutor's Association
Ann O'Donnell, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Christine Barrett, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Scott Corbitt, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Michelle Gillcrist, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Lizzy Goodwin, Ohio Attorney General's Office
Valerie Kunze, Ohio Public Defender's Office
Nolan Stevens, OCHLA

On the phone:

Tom Stickrath, Superintendent BCI & I
Judge Sikora

Minutes

Attorney General Mike DeWine called the meeting to order. He thanked all the commission for the work they have done in the past and congratulated his predecessor, Richard Cordray, for all the work that has been accomplished.

The objection of today's meeting is to look at the recommendations and see what has been completed and what still needs to be done.

AG DeWine would like to use the previous recommendations as a beginning, but there are two areas that the Attorney General's Office will focus on.

1. Law Enforcement – Our mission is to be able to work with law enforcement to criminally prosecute offenders of human trafficking. We want to be able to assist local law enforcement and prosecutors. These are difficult cases to develop. We need to work with local authorities to prosecute. He is not satisfied unless we can criminally prosecute, our goal is to raise the bar on prosecutions.
2. Education – law enforcement needs to be educated.

Steve Shumaker gave a brief overview of what the Attorney General's office can provide:

- BCI, laboratory, agents
- Organized Crime (OCIC) can help form a task force to attack specific problems.
- OPOTA – Educate the public and law enforcement officers.
 - We have doubled regional trainings to get as many officers trained as possible.
- Crime Victims Section of the Attorney General's Office
- Criminal Justice, Special Prosecution
 - Specialized prosecutors that can assist in the prosecution. They will only assist if asked.

Why does it take so long to investigate a case?

- Intensive investigations
- Background checks
- Surveillance
- You have to follow the money trail.
- Language barriers

This will require cooperation and teamwork. We have to make sure our relationships with locals are solid. We need partnerships at the local level to be successful. We are looking for ideas on how to make this work.

Brent Currence reported on the Law Enforcement Sub-committee. The Law Enforcement Subcommittee's focus was on law enforcement. They identified two key issues effecting the identification and investigation of trafficking cases. The first issue was training and how to make it available to all law enforcement. The second issue was inter-agency cooperation and communication.

Last year's accomplishments

- OPOTA has a four hour basic training which can also be taken online.
 - This year there are three one day investigators courses offered.
 - The Basic Peace Officers Training has included human trafficking training.
 - Last year over 8,000 Peace Officers were trained in human trafficking.
- Local training efforts from other agencies and local coalitions

Recommendations -

- Communication between local officers on cases, interagency cooperation by developing law enforcement working groups
- Designate a point person within the AG's Office to coordinate trafficking efforts
DeWine would like to have a contact person at BCI for local law enforcement.
Tom Stickrath, Superintendent of BCI suggested they use 1-866-BCI-OHIO, a law enforcement hotline that is already in place.

Emily Pelphrey reported on the Legal and Legislative Sub-committee. Emily reminded everyone that Ohio is a Home Rule State, which means we have to be invited to help investigate or prosecute a case.

Last year's accomplishments:

- Provided a stand alone provision, SB 235 which became effective March, 2011.
- Made human trafficking a mandatory prison sentence.

Recommendations -

- Review other states Safe Haven laws and get one passed in Ohio.

Celia Williamson reported on the Research and Analysis Sub-committee.

Last year's accomplishments:

- Worked on a study to provide how many estimated victims there are in Ohio at any given year, which are considered conservative.
 - 3,000 domestic minors from Ohio.
 - 1,078 recruited into sex trafficking
 - 783 foreign victims in sex trafficking
- Still pending, a study to provide specific numbers of victims of sex and labor trafficking.
 - Currently have four cities in Ohio with a goal of 8, to gather data.
 - Goal is to get more cities to agree to collect data.

Recommendations -

- Figure out where the high risk areas are
- Educate the public
- Have more oversight
- Train the Health Departments and Health Inspectors to be able to recognize trafficking

Michelle Hannan reported on the Victim Assistance & Safe Locations Sub Committee.

Last Year's Accomplishments –

- Developed anti-trafficking coalitions around the state
 - There are presently 8 coalitions
 - Created a database

Recommendations –

- Need to get a coalition in southern Ohio
- Continue training
- Strengthen coalitions
- Collect data
- Peer review process to assure quality
- Need for residential programming
- Develop programs that are specific for human trafficking
- Need more attorneys to meet the needs of trafficked persons.
 - There is a training on September 28, 2011 for attorneys and prosecutors
- Need for Therapists – would like to offer training

Crystal Allen reported on the Prevention, Outreach and Education Sub-committee.

Last Year's Accomplishments –

- Public service announcements have been created

Recommendations –

- Add more training into continued education.
- Use social media to get information to the public.
- The Department of Education created training on violence and prevention for grades

K-12

Jeff Barrows, founder of Gracehaven, is developing two curriculums one for students and one for teachers, principals and counselors.

- Possibly have training for teachers on how to recognize human trafficking.

Debra Seltzer spoke on the Demand Sub-committee

They had met several times throughout the year to determine the best way to educate men to reduce the demand.

Other business –

Clark County Sheriff Gene Kelly wanted to remind us that labor trafficking exists in addition to sex trafficking, especially in the rural areas like Clark County. He mentioned the recent arrest of five labor traffickers.

- Benito Lucio discussed reaching out to the Latino community to educate them on trafficking, and offered to use his radio show as an outlet

Brian Moskowitz – ICE is available to assist in human trafficking cases involved in foreign nationals that are brought here or taken to another country.

Adjourned.