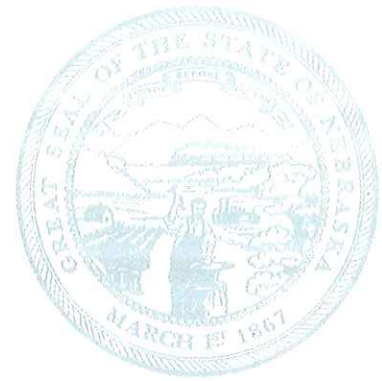


NEBRASKA

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**COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**



Pete Ricketts, Governor

Human Trafficking Task Force

December, 2018 Report

Dear Senator,

The Task Force on Human Trafficking (Governor's Task Force) is required by Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1430(13) to issue a report to the Clerk of the Legislature its recommendations for legislation. This letter is in fulfillment of that requirement.

The Task Force was created by LB 1145(2012) by former Senator Amanda McGill. The task force duties are enumerated in Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1430 – 81-1431, and include establishing training in the issues surrounding human trafficking, and how the training should be provided for law enforcement agencies, public defenders, judges, detention center staff, and other relevant officials who potentially would be working with human trafficking perpetrators or victims. The task force is also required to study the extent of human trafficking in Nebraska, research and recommend a model of rehabilitative services for victims of human trafficking, and to work with the Department of Labor to develop or select informational posters to be placed around the state which must include the National Human Trafficking Resources Center Hotline, to help raise awareness of human trafficking and provide a number for victims to call to get assistance. The task force has accomplished everything they were statutorily obligated to do. The Task Force membership has indicated through acclamation they no longer desire to meet as virtually all the members on our Task Force are also working on the Attorney General's Task Force (the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force).

As the work of the Attorney General has moved forward, a task force within that office has been established, consisting of an advisory group as well as several working groups including service providers, law enforcement, and community partners. This task force, in collaboration with the Salvation Army, has also been awarded a three-year grant, now extended into its fourth year, from the U.S. Department of Justice, specifically for law enforcement agencies and victim service providers, for \$1.5 million dollars. As stated above, virtually all of the members on our Task Force are currently working in the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force (NHTTF). A summary of the NHTTF follows and is respectfully submitted by Glen Parks, Assistant Attorney General and NHTTF Coordinator at the Attorney General's Office:

Darrell Fisher, Executive Director

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Legislative advancement. During the 2018 Legislative session, LB 1132 was passed by the Unicameral, providing a way for trafficking victims to have their criminal convictions set aside when the crimes happened a result of being trafficked. This bill was sponsored by Senator Patty Pansing-Brooks.

Training and expanded awareness. The Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force (NHTTF) conducted numerous trainings to a few thousand Nebraskans since the last report, some of these were awareness-raising for the general public and others were more in-depth, specialty training for law enforcement, service providers, or medical professionals. Plans are underway to even train Nebraska Department of Labor inspectors on the signs of labor trafficking.

NHTTF will be giving three-hour basic human trafficking training to law enforcement at six or seven locations across the state in the spring in an attempt to get all sworn officers to have some basic understanding of human trafficking and what it looks like.

Scope of investigation efforts. The NHTTF operates in part through the five regional teams covering the state to coordinate human trafficking investigations and operations. Each regional team has conducted pro-active operations, both targeting sex buyers for prosecution and focusing on those being provided for sex to ascertain whether they are victims. These operations are adjusting to the changing landscape, including the FBI takeover of the largest online prostitution website, Backpage.com, in April. Fifty-nine new investigations were opened in 2017. As of the end of 2018's third quarter, September 30, there were 20 open human trafficking investigations – 15 sex trafficking and 5 labor trafficking – involving about 100 potential victims. Within the last few months, there have been three sex trafficking convictions in Nebraska.

The law enforcement tips coming in from the National Human Trafficking Hotline continue to increase. The AG's Office, Nebraska State Patrol, FBI and Homeland Security Investigations simultaneously get the information from the hotline. These agencies have developed a quick and effective method to field and respond to reported tips in a coordinated manner.

Model of rehabilitative services. This year, the NHTTF developed a "Standards of Practice to Support Victim-Survivors of Trafficking" guide. Service providers across the state will coordinate the implementation of these standards of practice within their individual network of regional services in the upcoming year. Also, the NHTTF continues to advocate for a victim centered approach to responding to human trafficking within state, regional and local multi-disciplinary teams.

Based on the work that is being undertaken by the Attorney General's office, and the work that has been accomplished by the Governor's Human Trafficking Task Force, a discussion concerning the future of the Governor's Human Trafficking Task Force was held during a meeting held on October 20, 2016. The task force feels our duties and responsibilities have been completed, recommends the legislature sunset this task force, and transfer any remaining duties and responsibilities for combating human

trafficking to the Attorney General's office. Many members of the Governor's Task Force are working on the Attorney General's task force, and we feel that a duplication of these efforts is unnecessary. Plans are being made to introduce legislation in the 106th Nebraska Legislature to either have the sun set on the Task Force on Human Trafficking, or to have §81-1430 – 81-1431 repealed as a duplication of services.

We would welcome any concerns or questions you may have. Please contact Stan Clouse, Chair of the Task Force on Human Trafficking or Darrell Fisher, Executive Director of the Crime Commission if you have any issues you would like to discuss with the task force.

Sincerely,

Stan Clouse, Chair
Task Force on Human Trafficking