The following is a compendium of news reports over the last month that may be of interest to our AG offices that are dealing with human trafficking issues. Neither the National Association of Attorneys General nor the National Attorneys General Training & Research Institute expresses a view as to the accuracy of news accounts, nor as to the position expounded by the authors of the hyperlinked articles.

November 2014

News from AG Offices

Georgia Attorney General Sam Olens announced that his office hired a special prosecutor, Camila Wright, to combat sex trafficking throughout the state. Wright had previously established the Fulton County Human Trafficking Unit while serving at the county district attorney’s office. Wright will also train law enforcement throughout the state to identify human trafficking. In addition, General Olens spoke to the Rome Exchange Club about the programs in place to combat sex trafficking and prescription drug abuse in Georgia after the FBI named Georgia as one of the worst states for the illegal sale and purchase of minors for sex.

Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley announced that an investigation initiated by her office led to the indictment of a Quincy woman, Tania Cipriano, by the Middlesex County Grand Jury on charges of trafficking of persons for sexual servitude, deriving support from prostitution, and keeping a house of ill fame.

Michigan Assistant Attorney General Kelly Carter spoke at Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine on the medical signs of sex trafficking and labor trafficking. She described several telltale signs of abuse and emphasized the difficult nature of urging victims report their traffickers.

New Jersey Acting Attorney General John J. Hoffman announced that an investigation by the Division of Criminal Justice Human Trafficking and FBI Human Trafficking Task Force in Atlantic City led to the arrest and guilty plea of Marc A. Branch, who ran a prostitution ring from his apartment in Ventnor. Branch pled guilty to second-degree conspiracy to commit human trafficking and will be sentenced five years in state prison. A client of the ring, Francis H. Forvour, also pled guilty to the same charge and will be sentenced to four years in state prison.
**State Legislative Activity**

New York Governor Cuomo signed legislation, [S.6840/A.8749-A](#), to protect victims of human trafficking by giving them resources to rebuild their lives and ensure they receive the help and treatment they need. The new law protects 16- and 17-year old victims by sealing their records against future employers, granting them “youthful offender” status where previously they would be convicted of a crime, and giving discretion to judges to classify a juvenile as a “person in need of services” instead of a criminal defendant.

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder signed a [number of bills](#) which, among other things, increase the penalties for perpetrators under Michigan’s human trafficking laws. The new laws also provide sentence deferment to those convicted for the first time of prostitution and allows victims of trafficking to petition to have earlier convictions expunged. In addition, one of the new laws will create a permanent Human Trafficking Commission in the attorney general’s office.

**State Investigations/Arrests/Prosecutions**

**California**

**Sept. 25, 2014:** A Human Trafficking Task Force in [Los Angeles County](#) made 91 arrests for pimping, prostitution, and payment for sexual services following an eight-month investigation. The investigation rescued 22 minors and referred 54 women to victim resources.

**Oct. 18, 2014:** A Palmdale man, Bruce Gordon, was sentenced to 27 years to life in state prison after pleading no contest to charges of assault with a firearm, lewd act upon a child, sodomy by use of force, and human trafficking to commit another crime.

**Oct. 22, 2014:** After a traffic stop, [Fremont police officers](#) arrested a man on suspicion of human trafficking. A girl who was with the man at the time of his arrest was suspected to be a teen prostitute. She was found to have a felony warrant for prostitution and the man was also found to have an outstanding warrant.

**Florida**

**Oct. 3, 2014:** The [Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office](#) arrested and charged three Hungarian men, Gabor Acs, Viktor Berki, and Andras Janos Vass, with human trafficking, racketeering, and deriving support from prostitution. Authorities claim that the three men lured young gay Hungarian men to South Florida and forced them into prostitution.

**Oct. 9, 2014:** [Miami police](#) are investigating a sex trafficking ring that enslaved a 13-year old girl that they believe is led by Audelin Pierre. Prosecutors have agreed to plea deals with three defendants accused of sex trafficking in exchange for their cooperation against Pierre.
Oct. 16, 2014: A Pinellas County jury convicted Peter Kitt guilty of racketeering and conspiracy to commit racketeering. Kitt worked alongside Shawn Franklin and Holly Cannarelli, both of whom pleaded guilty to the same charges and testified during Kitt’s trial. Kitt was described as the forefront of a human trafficking and prostitution ring operating throughout Tampa Bay and could be sentenced to a maximum term of 60 years.

Georgia

Oct. 31, 2014: Dunwoody police arrested and charged the operators of a prostitution ring posing as high-end modeling services called Atlanta Fantasies and Ashley’s of Atlanta. Two suspects, Robert Tyler and Donna Allen, have been arrested so far.

Idaho

Oct. 24, 2014: Idaho State Police arrested four suspects from Georgia, Derricka McCloud, Kentraviaen Tuff, Demeiris Fields, and Bradley Roberts, on human trafficking charges. The ISP received a report that a 18-year old woman was being held against her will by armed individuals heading west on I-84. State troopers found and stopped the vehicle and later recovered the female victim who had sustained minor injuries.

Indiana

Oct. 15, 2014: The Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department arrested a Tennessee man, Terrence Tatum, in May on human trafficking allegations, including the trafficking of a minor. After signing a plea agreement, Tatum was sentenced to two years with the Indiana Department of Corrections on his guilty plea to one charge of promoting prostitution.

Kentucky

Oct. 27, 2014: In the first human trafficking conviction in Jefferson County, a Louisville man, Justin Ritter, was sentenced to ten year in prison; he also will be included on the sex offender registry for twenty years. He earlier pled guilty to human trafficking of a 17-year old female and other charges.

Louisiana

Oct. 8, 2014: Shreveport police arrested two women and a man after an undercover operation which targeted human trafficking. A 17-year old was also arrested and booked with prostitution.

Massachusetts

Oct. 29, 2014: A Malden man, Thomas V. Rose, was indicted and pled not guilty to charges of child enticement, child rape, and human trafficking of a minor. Rose was already classified as a Level 3 sex offender by the state. Suffolk District Attorney Daniel F. Conley said that Rose enticed teenage victims into commercial sex activity through marijuana and alcohol.
Maine

Oct. 6, 2014: Two men in Sidney, Frederick Harry Horne Jr. and Frederick H. Horne Sr., were arrested and charged with sex trafficking after a police raid of their residence. Horne Jr. pled guilty and was fined $1000 for the misdemeanor offense.

Michigan

Oct. 3, 2014: Three Lansing residents, Mariah Haughton, Christopher Turryle Bryant, and Jonathan Purnell, were charged with multiple counts of sex trafficking and related charges. An unnamed girl, who had been lured into working for them, provided information for investigators about the extent of the prostitution ring and their recruitment methods.

Oct. 3, 2014: Lenawee County Sheriff's Department investigated and charged an Adrian man, Sergio Rodriguez Torres, with human trafficking for commercial sex, unlawful imprisonment, and human trafficking threats of violence. Torres had taken two women to a migrant farm worker camp and forced them to submit to sex with other men.

Mississippi

Oct. 24, 2014: Harrison County Sheriff's investigators found and arrested Maxwell Isley Phillips on a chance encounter while going through a storage facility. Phillips is suspected of promoting prostitution with an underage girl and faces up to 30 years in prison and $500,000 fine after state lawmakers amended their anti-human trafficking statute effective July 1, 2013.

New Hampshire

Oct. 9, 2014: Portsmouth police have arrested a Boston man, Frantzer Fleurimond, on accusations of human trafficking and distributing heroin. Police also arrested Molly Sloan of Stafford on charges of accomplice to prostitution and possession of marijuana.

New York

Oct. 16, 2014: New York State police arrested a Rochester man, Vandon Jones, following an investigation into attempted sex trafficking. The incident happened on May 15 and the investigation is ongoing.

North Carolina

Oct. 30, 2014: The Graham Police Department is investigating a human trafficking case in Alamance County. The investigation is ongoing and so far three individuals, Vanessa Snyder, Julia Farias, and Allen Harris Jr., have been charged.

North Dakota

Oct. 23, 2014: A Mandan man was arrested and pled not guilty to attempted human trafficking. Andrey Yuryevick Kutsiy claimed that he was a victim of entrapment by federal
agents after he responded to a Craigslist ad and exchanged text messages with an undercover agent. Kutsiy initially stated he wanted an 18-year old woman but agreed to pay $150 to have sex with an underage girl when informed only underage girls were available.

**Ohio**

**Oct. 6, 2014:** Westlake police and FBI Violent Crimes Task Force arrested Desmond Warren though a sting operation. Warren was charged and convicted for trafficking in persons, compelling prostitution, and promoting prostitution. This was the first ever human trafficking conviction in Cuyahoga County.

**Rhode Island**

**Oct. 28, 2014:** Warwick police report that a Rhode Island man, Terrence Dudley, was taken custody in Ohio. He will be arraigned on charges of conspiracy and sex trafficking of a minor. Dudley was identified from Rhode Island’s Most Wanted list.

**Tennessee**

**Oct. 17, 2014:** Two women in Nashville were arrested for trafficking a teenage girl for sex. The victim was a runaway from Birmingham, Alabama, who called a relative who then called 911.

**Texas**

**Oct. 16, 2014:** A San Antonio man, Glen Dukes, was found guilty of human trafficking charges and sentenced to two life terms in prison.

**Oct. 30, 2014:** The Corpus Christi Police Department arrested thirteen people on suspicion of involvement in a human trafficking ring. The investigation is ongoing, and police have not released any information about possible victims.

**Utah**

**Oct. 29, 2014:** St. George Police Department arrested Richard Moultrie on charges that include human trafficking and kidnapping. The department obtained information from a woman who claimed that Moultrie kidnapped her from Las Vegas and forced her into prostitution activities.

**Washington**

**Oct. 15, 2014:** It took just 30 minutes for a King County jury to find Tyler for attempted commercial sexual abuse of a minor. King County prosecutor Dan Satterberg and other officials announced a local “Buyer Beware” program aimed at reducing local demand for prostitution by 20% in two years.

**Wisconsin**
Oct. 9, 2014: A Rhinelander woman, Carrie Steinmetz, was convicted on charges of human trafficking and child enticement felonies. She was sentenced to three years of probation on the sex with an underage child charge and deferred judgment for three years on the child enticement charge. Two other men, Michael Johnson of Manawa and Thomas Franz of Rhinelander, will face related charges soon.


Articles of General Interest

The Washington Supreme Court is considering whether Backpage has immunity under the federal Communications Decency Act because it did not create or develop the sexual services ads itself. The site does, however, provide tools and instructions for advertisers of escort services to use.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety reported that convictions for sex trafficking doubled from 2012 to 2013. Minnesota passed a Safe Harbor Law in 2011, which increased penalties against abusers, created a victim-centric response by recognizing sexually exploited youth in the state’s child protection codes, and implemented a “No Wrong Door” model, adding more resources such as housing for exploited youths and more training for law enforcement.

Cincinnati, Ohio, police have begun enforcing new rules to place higher penalties on potential johns caught searching the streets for prostitute. In addition to criminal charges, johns will face a $1,000 ticket on their first offense and a $2,500 ticket each time after that. The police will also impound their cars.

The Annals of Health Law, the health policy and law review of Loyola University Chicago School of Law, published a study documenting the health consequences of human trafficking. The study tracks over one hundred domestic sex trafficking victims and survivors and illustrates how the health care system fails to identify and combat sex trafficking. The article also provides recommendations to health law policy makers to address these concerns.

GABRIELA USA activists held a rally in front of the Philippine Embassy to protest the slow progress in pursuing a human trafficking case against Isidro Rodriguez. Rodriguez was a recruitment agency owner and primary trafficker in the Philippines and allegedly was responsible for the trafficking of many overseas Filipino workers and teachers.

Thunder Valley Casino Resort in Sacramento, California, trained its managers on how to spot victims and perpetrators of human trafficking by enlisted the help of victim advocate organization Courage Worldwide. Casinos are a common place for trafficking crimes to take place. Thunder Valley Casino Resort hopes that their managers will eventually train their entire staff of 2,500 employees.
The **14B District Court in Ypsilanti Township** is seeking funding for a specialized “prostitute court” designed to reduce recidivism among prostitutes. The court was initially established in March with a grant from the Michigan Supreme Court innovation fund. It has thus far served seven women, none of whom have been re-arrested. Judge Charles Pope oversees the program and recognizes that virtually all prostitutes suffer from other issues such as substance abuse and severe trauma in their lives. He said that the program's purpose is to treat the woman as victims instead of criminals and connect them with direct services.

The **New England Center for Investigative Reporting** noted that Massachusetts state police data show that far more women than men are arrested for prostitution and prostitution-related charges. Nearly 70% of the 920 arrests in 2013 on prostitution-related charges were of women. Capt. Williams Collins of the Springfield Police Department explained that costs of enforcement make it much easier to arrest the prostitute, who can be arrested while standing on a corner, than the buyer, who must discuss the exchange of money and often requires overtime pay and help of female officers from outside the district. A task force chaired by Attorney General Martha Coakley filed recommendations to reduce demand rather than focusing on supply and also sought to expand the sex buyer education program, a court-ordered class meant to deter demand.

Executive director of **Vision East**, Jessie Alfaro, describes a typical trafficking story based on the account of a girl, “Rose,” whose real name is being withheld to protect her identity. The most common way for traffickers to recruit victims, accounting for 51% of cases, was to show a romantic interest in them, according to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. These victims often are completely reliant on their traffickers and unable to survive outside the system created by their traffickers. This reliance makes them very unlikely to reach out to law enforcement for help, and many don’t even see themselves as victims.

**The Polaris Project**, one of the nation’s leading non-profit organizations tracking human trafficking, released a report tracking calls to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, a 24-hour national hotline call center. The data consisted of calls, e-mails, and online tips and was collected between Dec. 7, 2007 and Dec. 31, 2012.

**Holly Austin Smith**, trafficking victim and author of *Walking Prey*, offers ten tips to parents to protect children from predators. They include building self-esteem, teaching media literacy, a healthy perspective on one’s own life, and education on sexual health.

The **Urban Institute**, a policy think tank, released a report linking the H-2A agricultural guest worker program with human trafficking. The report finds that most victims of human trafficking were brought to the U.S. on temporary visas. Because the visas are tied to a particular employer, the agricultural workers are especially vulnerable to fraud or coercion. The study sample was small and not nationally representative, so Collen Owens, the lead author, cautioned against generalizing its findings to the entire U.S. Owens said that a problem certainly exists and further research should be conducted to ensure the current system isn’t abused.