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 state-focused 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.

September 2014

News from AG Offices

Arkansas Attorney General Dustin McDaniel’s Human Trafficking Task Force issued its report to the legislature. It made 19 recommendations, including the establishment of a pilot “Johns School” in Little Rock and passing legislation to ensure that those convicted of human trafficking register as sex offenders.

Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi convened the first meeting of the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking on August 18. The meeting was broadcast live on the Florida Channel website.

Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway, along with the Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention Board and the Catholic Charities of Louisville HOPE Campaign, unveiled a new online video series designed to increase awareness of human trafficking in Kentucky.

Louisiana Attorney General Buddy Caldwell announced the arrest on human trafficking charges of Candice Caulfield. A tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children led the AG’s Cyber Crime unit, assisted by the Jefferson Parish Sheriff’s Office, and Homeland Security investigators, to investigate Caulfield for possible child sex trafficking.

Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto spoke at the first annual fundraiser for victims of human trafficking. The event was cohosted by the Office of the Attorney General and the Junior League of Reno.

New Jersey Acting Attorney General John Hoffman announced that a Lakewood man and four male associates were sentenced to state prison for operating brothels that were part of a network of brothels in a number of states. Women were trafficked from Mexico to work in brothels in Lakewood. Many of them were told they were going to be working as house cleaners or baby-sitters. These men were the first to be charged under New Jersey's
omnibus human trafficking law. Three defendants were sentenced to five years in state prison and two were sentenced to three years.

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine announced that three women were freed from what is believed to be a human trafficking organization. The Attorney General’s Organized Crime Investigations Commission investigated a Marietta hotel room after receiving a tip and arrested Xavier Freeman on charges of human trafficking, compelling prostitution, and promoting prostitution as well as the possession of more than 180 Hydromorphone pills.

Recent Court Decisions

On July 29, the Missouri Supreme Court issued an opinion in *State of Missouri v. Sylvester Porter* that will make it easier to prosecute sex abuse cases, particularly those involving children. The decision struck down a rule that allowed appellate judges to set aside convictions on sex crimes if the victim’s testimony was uncorroborated or if they found the victims’ testimony wasn’t credible.

State Legislative Activity

California Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 939 into law. The new law will allow cases against defendants accused of committing human trafficking crimes in multiple jurisdictions to be combined in a single trial. The California legislature has also passed three other measures to assist in combatting human trafficking. SB 1388 would increase the fine and impose a mandatory two days in jail -- and up to one year -- for those who pursue sex from a minor. SB 955 would add human trafficking to the list of offenses that allow for wiretaps. AB 1585 proposes to overturn solicitation and prostitution convictions for those whose charges resulted from being victims of human trafficking.

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed into law SB 3558. The new law establishes a fund that will help provide specialized services to human trafficking victims. The new fund will use previously collected fines from criminal offenses to provide targeted services to survivors.

State Investigations/Arrests/Prosecutions

Arizona

Aug. 31: A number of law enforcement agencies, including the Yavapai Sheriff’s Office and Homeland Security, conducted an operation to target the buyers of children for sex. They arrested eight men who responded to ads placed on the Internet.

Aug. 22: Phoenix authorities have arrested 14 people in three days in an investigation that targeted would-be pimps. In a combined effort involving several local police departments, law enforcement used social media to locate individuals who intended to recruit others for the sex trade.
California

Aug. 25: Three people have been arrested in Orange County by the Irvine Police Department and charged with human trafficking. Two men, Ginn Woo Park and Heung Soon Kim and a woman, Miyoun Kim, have been arrested on human trafficking and pimping and pandering charges. A high bail is being requested for the two men.

Aug. 11: The Los Angeles District Attorney’s Office announced that Lebrette Winn and Eric James Avery were convicted by a jury of human trafficking. Winn was also found guilty of pandering, sodomy, rape, aggravated mayhem, and kidnapping. They were accused of forcing two women and a 16-year old to work as prostitutes.

Aug. 7: A joint investigation by the Visalia PD, the Fresno PD, and the FBI has led to the arrest of Tyrell Richmond in connection with the sex trafficking of three minors. He was subsequently indicted in federal district court for the Eastern District of California.

Aug. 4: A sting operation by the Bakersfield Police Department and the Kern County Sheriff’s Office led to the arrest of nine individuals for aiding in prostitution. A subsequent investigation revealed that one of the “adult” females arrested was actually 16 years old. This led to human trafficking charges against Jessica Davidson of Holland, Texas.

Aug. 2: San Bernadino vice officers found a 15-year old girl who told them that she was being made to work as a prostitute. Craig Anthony Parker was subsequently arrested and booked on suspicion of human trafficking and pandering a minor.

Colorado

Aug. 28: The Colorado Springs Police Human Trafficking Unit arrested three women after vice operations were conducted at massage parlors in the city. Two adult females were identified as victims and were offered services to help in their recovery. Since the trafficking unit was created in January, officers have recovered 25 underage victims of prostitution and 34 adult victims. Additionally, the unit has arrested 7 pimps, 5 johns, and are investigating and addition 9 people for soliciting underage prostitution.

Aug. 24: Colorado law enforcement officials arrested Christopher Sullivan, who is not only accused of trafficking a 17-year old girl from New Mexico, but also with committing a crime spree throughout the Lookout Mountain area. Sullivan is the first person to be charged under Colorado’s new trafficking law.

Florida

Aug. 27: An investigation by Largo and Clearwater police and Homeland Security Investigators has led to the rescue of a 21-year old mentally handicapped woman and the arrest of Troy Driskell, Amy Kranwinkel, and Sarah Morris on human trafficking and solicitation charges.
Aug. 26: Jose Alcedes Ojeda and Kristi Lynn Haney were arrested on human trafficking charges after allegedly arranging for a minor girl to have sex with clients. Orlando police were alerted to the victimization when the girl's father called police and told them that he had found her being advertised on Backpage.com.

Georgia

Aug. 26: Clayton County senior ADA Jeff Gore announced that Quincy Maurice Jones was sentenced to serve 20 years in prison after he pled guilty to human trafficking. This is believed the first human trafficking conviction in Clayton County.

Indiana

Aug 19: Indianapolis resident Pardip Singh was found guilty of attempted promotion of human trafficking among other charges. Evidently unhappy regarding the lack of money he was receiving from his wife’s family in India, he attempted to sell his wife for sex. Testimony at trial revealed a long pattern of severe domestic abuse.

Aug. 4: In Indianapolis, Joseph Daniels pled guilty to human trafficking for victimizing a 15-year old girl. As part of a plea deal, Dennis will be sentenced to 14 years in prison and be required to register as a sex offender and undergo HIV testing.

Nevada

Aug. 8: Las Vegas Metro Police announced that they had taken part in the eighth "National Day of Johns Arrests" that ran from July 17 through August 8. A variety of sting operations resulted in the arrest of 19 johns and the identification of 16 victims of trafficking, including 8 minors.

New York

Aug. 14: Johnny Jackson pled guilty to sex trafficking last July. At his sentencing hearing, he explained that he believed that prostitution is a victimless crime. A Manhattan judge sentenced him to 9 to 18 years in prison.

July 29: Eric Oliver was sentenced in April to 6 to 12 years in state prison after pleading guilty to sex trafficking. He subsequently petitioned the court to withdraw his plea alleging that he was given bad legal advice regarding whether he would be placed on the sex offender registration list. Justice John Brunetti, however, concluded that there were significant other factors that induced his guilty plea, including a possibility of up to 75 years in prison.

North Carolina

Aug. 27: Greensboro police arrested Joseph Drayton at a local hotel after receiving a complaint that prostitution and narcotics activity were occurring there. Drayton faces two charges of human trafficking of a child and other crimes.
Aug. 26: Raleigh police have charged Eric Javon Thompson with human trafficking involving adult victims and two counts of assault by strangulation against two of those women. He has also been charged with robbery of $120 from a person.

Aug. 13: In a suspected labor trafficking case, four teen-agers from different states were found in a Wilmington hotel being held against their will. Two victims were sisters from North Dakota and two were male cousins from Tennessee. They were allegedly recruited by Jeremy Moots and Justin Angermeler to sell magazines. The girls told police that they were paid $20 for eight hours of work and, when they said they wanted to return home, the defendants refused, citing a contract they had signed. The defendants are each being held on a $350,000 bond.

Aug. 8: Burlington police and the Alamance County Sheriff's Department announced the arrest of Bryant Lemar Williams, a long-distance truck driver. He has been charged with human trafficking of a child and abduction.

North Dakota

Aug. 1: A Williston judge set bond at $2 million for a man charged with human trafficking and several other felonies and misdemeanors. He was one of the main subjects of "The Overnighters," a documentary that follows a Lutheran pastor who opened up his Williston church and parking lot to oil workers with nowhere to stay.

South Dakota

Aug. 11: Attorney General Marty Jackley and Brendan Johnson, the U.S. Attorney for South Dakota, met with members of the state, local and federal team who were targeting men who were seeking to have sex with children at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. This year, six men were arrested during the Rally on sex trafficking charges.

Texas

Aug. 8: The Dallas Police Department rescued a 15-year-old sex trafficking victim after receiving an anonymous tip. Michelle Tortora and Arthur Lee Walters were arrested on human trafficking charges.

Washington

July 31: A federal grand jury in Seattle indicted John Henry Cyprian Jr. on four federal counts involving sex trafficking of women in western Washington and Oregon. Cyprian was arrested by Bellevue police and was booked into state custody in June. The indictment is an example of the close partnership between local and federal law enforcement and prosecutors in tackling the issue of human trafficking in Washington.

Wisconsin
Aug. 28: In Milwaukee, Ray Weatherall Jr. was found guilty on 14 counts, including sex trafficking, sexual assault, child abuse, and witness intimidation. He was arrested last fall after his primary victim who had been viciously beaten by Weatherall reached out to her mother. The mother contacted police. An account of the testimony at trial can be found in an article in Wisconsin's Journal Sentinel.

Aug. 26: A law enforcement sting, coordinated by Superior, Wisconsin, police and Duluth, Minnesota, law enforcement, aimed at addressing demand, led to the arrest of a Douglas County, Wisconsin, man on charges of human trafficking. He allegedly responded to a fake online ad advertising a 15-year old girl. Five other men were also arrested on prostitution charges.

Articles of General Interest

Shared Hope International and Arizona State University released a report showing that judges are sentencing those who have been found – or have pled – guilty to soliciting sex from a minor to insignificant incarceration times. For instance, the report notes, in Arizona the crime carries a sentence of up to 24 years, but a Phoenix defendant convicted of the crime may more realistically expect a term of three months.

A primer for educators on recognizing the signs of trafficking among their students has been made available by the Texas Human Trafficking Task Force.

The Ohio Board of Cosmetology is requiring all Ohio hairdressers to complete an hour of continuing education to learn to recognize potential signs of human trafficking with their clients beginning February 1, 2015. This requirement was prompted by the realization that often traffickers will take their victims to salons for “make-overs” and that women will often talk to their hairdressers about things that they might not share with others.

Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart, whose office has taken a lead role in the annual “National Day of Johns Arrests,” announced that during the two-week, nationwide investigation, police arrested 500 Johns and 14 pimps and traffickers. Fifty-three percent of the arrested Johns were married and forty-seven percent were college graduates. (See the arrest statistics for Las Vegas above.)

The Albany County, New York, District Attorney’s Office launched a webpage in response to human trafficking cases related to the website Backpage.com. It will feature mug shots of those convicted of human trafficking and prostitution, along with information and resources.

An article in the Bowling Green Daily News discussed the issue of human trafficking in Kentucky, focusing on the story of Margeaux Gray who was trafficked from the age of 5 until she reached 18.