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.

October 2015

News from AG Offices

**Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi**, together with Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings and the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation, announced the arrests of 21 individuals following an intensive two-year investigation into a heroin and human trafficking organization in the region. Several human trafficking victims, including a child, were rescued and at least 20 others identified. Other suspects are being sought. **Gen. Bondi** also announced the arrest of Michael Gordon Luck, 58, of Indiana, on charges related to the human trafficking of minors. According to the investigation, Luck purchased, for sexual purposes, two females less than 18 years of age while visiting the Orlando area. Luck allegedly harbored the minors at his hotel room for approximately one week.

**Indiana Attorney General Greg Zoeller** visited the Clark County Youth Shelter & Family Services facility in Jeffersonville early in September in his office’s ongoing effort to raise awareness of human sex trafficking across the state. **Gen. Zoeller’s op-ed** in the *Indianapolis Star*, reacting to the arrest of Jared Fogle, pointed out that crimes against children, especially sex crimes, are entirely too frequent. He emphasized the importance of the Indiana’s Not Buying It campaign and urged Indiana residents to stand up against human trafficking.

**Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey** asked the legislature to update the state’s wiretap law so that it can be used in human trafficking and gun trafficking investigations. Two bills have been proposed which would expand the 1968 wiretap law.

**Montana Attorney General Tim Fox** visited the University of Great Falls to discuss the issue of human trafficking in Montana.

**Rhode Island Attorney General Peter Kilmartin** announced the conviction of Rhode Island Jmaire Wray, 16, on two counts of sex trafficking a minor, one count of conspiracy to
commit sex trafficking of a minor, and one count of felony assault. He was sentenced to 15 years, with six to serve. His co-conspirator, Reginald Chaney, 20, has been charged federally. Chaney and Wray were arrested in East Providence by East Providence Police on January 29, 2015, based on information developed during an investigation conducted by the Providence Police Department with the assistance of Homeland Security Investigations.

**Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes** and key members of his staff conducted a training session on human trafficking for Utah sheriffs attending the Utah Sheriffs Corrections and Law Enforcement Conference.

**Wisconsin Attorney General Brad Schimel** announced the creation of a state-level human trafficking task force which will be co-chaired by him and by the Secretary of the Department of Children and Families. The goal is to have a fully staffed and operational Task Force by the end of the year.

**State Legislative Activity**

North Carolina’s **SB 279** would require local school districts to include sex trafficking prevention and awareness in designing their sex education curricula.

**In the Courts: State**

The **Washington Supreme Court**, in a 6-3 decision, has allowed a lawsuit against Backpage.com to continue. The plaintiffs filing the lawsuit were in the seventh and ninth grades when adult sex traffickers sold them as prostitutes on Backpage. As it has in other lawsuits filed against it, Backpage.com argued that the Communications Decency Act gave the website immunity for ads that it hosts, but does not produce. However, the plaintiffs allege that Backpage didn't just host the ads, but helped develop the content by providing instructions for writing ads that work.

**State Investigations/Arrests/Prosecutions**

**California**

**Sept. 10, 2015:** An investigation by the **Los Angeles Police Department’s** South Bureau Human Trafficking unit and the Long Beach Police Department has led to the arrest of Raylonzo Roberts, 40. He has been charged with 14 felony counts involving human trafficking of teenage girls as young as 13.

**Illinois**

**September 2, 2015:** The **Cook County state’s attorney’s office** announced that Dajuan Brown, 39, pled guilty to one count of aggravated trafficking in persons and was sentenced to eight years in prison. According to prosecutors, he ran a violent sex trafficking ring on Chicago’s west side for six years. The ring victimized 12 young women who were kept locked in his apartment.
Kentucky

September 15, 2015: A Franklin County Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney announced that Jonathan Diaz, 19, was indicted on multiple counts in a human trafficking case involving teen-age girls. The indictment involves two 15-year-old girls whom he coached to pose provocatively in skimpy clothing so he could take pictures and send them to potential customers. He was caught in a police sting. Other victims are being sought. He allegedly lured the girls by posting on Facebook.

Michigan

September 16, 2015: Jonathan Purnell was sentenced to 5½ years’ incarceration after he pled guilty to two counts of transporting a woman for prostitution. He had been accused of running a sex trafficking ring in the Lansing area.

Minnesota

September 2, 2015: Ramsey County District Judge Jennifer Frisch has sentenced two more defendants in a St. Paul sex trafficking ring that victimized under-age girls. Ishmael Jemaine Williams, 20, was sentenced to 12.5 years in prison and Yolanda Katrice Foster, 28, was sentenced to 8 years in prison. Both pled guilty to two counts of sex trafficking a minor. They are also required to register as sex offenders.

New Hampshire

September 4, 2015: Two individuals were indicted by the Hillsborough County North Grand Jury on human trafficking charges. Nathaniel Clarke, 36, faces nine felony counts of forcing three people to engage in sexual performance or activity by controlling their access to drugs and/or by confiscating identity documents. Amber Ford, 25, was indicted with Clarke on the human trafficking charge. She was also indicted on a separate felony theft charge.

New Jersey

September 1, 2015: As part of a negotiated plea agreement, Donnie Bethea, 42, pled guilty to human trafficking, sexual assault, and possession of a weapon. He will be sentenced to 13 years of incarceration in October. He trafficked seven different women in Atlantic City and Egg Harbor Township, according to Atlantic County Prosecutor Jim McCain. This is Atlantic City's first human trafficking conviction.

New Mexico

September 12, 2015: Wallace Carson, who was convicted in April of first-degree kidnapping, human trafficking, promoting prostitution, and accepting the earnings of a prostitute, was sentenced to 30 years in prison by a Bernalillo County judge. He kidnapped a 17-year old girl from an Albuquerque bus station and transported a 21-year-old woman from San Antonio to Albuquerque to provide sexual services to clients.
New York

September 24, 2015: Nassau Acting District Attorney Madeline Singas announced the arrest of Zhowei Yin and his wife Shuwen Ai on sex trafficking and promoting prostitution charges. The couple operate spas from Queens to Nassau and Suffolk counties. They allegedly forced immigrants into jobs as massage therapists and then required them to commit sex acts with clients.

North Carolina

September 5, 2015: Stevflon Casan Swindell, 34, was arrested by Fayetteville police and charged with human trafficking. He allegedly enticed a woman with the intent that she be held in sexual servitude in his home, which he used for prostitution.

September 2, 2015: Alamance County law enforcement arrested two men who had patronized a 15-year old human trafficking victim. Two other men who had kept the teen by threats of serious harm are being charged with violations of federal human trafficking law.

Texas

September 9, 2015: Johnson County law enforcement arrested Guy Minze, 44, in a police sting. He came to a hotel room with a club, expecting to find two 16-year old girls who had allegedly advertised on Backpage.com. Later investigation revealed that he intended to kidnap them and become their pimp.

September 3, 2015: A call to police from a teen who said she was being recruited into prostitution led Sulphur police to a hotel. There, they found three adults with three women, including two juveniles from Texas, who were being taken to Louisiana for prostitution. Kellarra Peterson, 23, Deaundrell Johnson, 23, and Fredrick Gentry, 30, were charged with human trafficking. Gentry was charged with human trafficking, possession, use, and distribution of MDMA, and contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile.

Articles of General Interest

Last month’s Newsletter reported on the federal prosecution in Ohio of two men in regard to labor trafficking at Ohio egg farms. In that case, at least five unaccompanied Guatemalan minors placed into federal custody at the border were released to individuals hired by the traffickers. These young men, one of whom was only 14, were then trafficked to Ohio where they were forced to work. According to an editorial in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, the indictment alleged that the traffickers decided to focus on minors, “believing them to be easier to bring successfully into the country, easier to control, and harder workers.”

The federal government has charged Sean Crumpler, 48, with sex trafficking boys in his rented Aurora, Colorado, home. He has been charged with 12 counts of child sex trafficking. Two 16-year old boys were living in the home along with about a dozen men between 18
and 21. The FBI Innocence Lost Tax Force in Denver investigated the case. A spokesman said that this fact situation, in which Crumpler allegedly lured young boys from California where he is the owner of an IT firm, is an unusual one because most sex trafficking incidents involving males occur at the street level.

The San Francisco Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking released a report in early September which studied the data of 19 nonprofit organizations in the city assisting victims of trafficking. In the last half of 2014, 291 individuals were identified as victims of sex trafficking in San Francisco. Two hundred twenty-four were young females, including 118 girls under the age of 18 and 12 girls 13-years old or younger.

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) has filed a lawsuit, on behalf of 6 workers, against Culpepper Enterprises and several individuals, alleging that they violated the Racketeer influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act in handling the guest worker H-2B program. Although the lawsuit does not allege labor trafficking, the allegations come very close to describing a situation close to trafficking. The laborers were hired to fulfill contracts with the Mississippi Department of Transportation and were supposed to be paid the prevailing wage of $11 an hour. Instead, they were paid the minimum wage of $7.25, from which Culpepper deducted fees for equipment, protective gear, and overpriced housing. In its report, Close to Slavery, the SPLC examined the exploitation of foreign workers through the H-2 guest worker program.

Cook County Sheriff Thomas Dart announced that a summer sting operation by a national coalition of law enforcement agencies led to 1032 arrests, including 961 would-be sex buyers and 71 traffickers. The sting led to the recovery of 258 adult and 50 juvenile victims.