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.

February 2016

Legislation

Federal

H.R. 4383 has been introduced in the House and referred to the Committees on the Judiciary and Homeland Security. It would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to enhance Department of Homeland Security coordination on how to identify and record information regarding individuals suspected or convicted of human trafficking.

State

California’s new law, which takes effect on July 1, 2016, prohibits foreign labor contractors in California from charging recruitment fees and requires them to register with and submit employment conditions to the Labor Commissioner.

Three bills have been introduced in the California legislature. AB 1681 would require that a smartphone that is manufactured on or after January 1, 2017, and sold in California, be capable of being decrypted and unlocked by its manufacturer or its operating system provider. Another bill is AB 1730. It would create a pilot program that would provide commercially sexually exploited children a safe place to stay with trauma-informed, mental health services that can help them recover and thrive. Finally, AB 1731 would establish a statewide, interagency task force made up of law enforcement, social services, child welfare, public health and the court system.

Indiana Attorney General Greg Zoeller has endorsed SB 354, which would decriminalize the charges against prostitutes under the age of 18 in Indiana and treat those involved as victims. Two other bills have also been introduced in the legislature addressing human
trafficking. **HB 1028** makes it a Class A misdemeanor, for a person to knowingly or intentionally visit a building, structure, vehicle, or other place with the intent to violate certain laws concerning human and sexual trafficking and would make it a Level 6 felony for a person to knowingly or intentionally maintain a building, structure, vehicle, or other place that is used one or more times to violate certain laws concerning human and sexual trafficking. **HB 1199** adds the crime of promotion of human trafficking of a minor to the definitions of "sex offender" and "sex or violent offender."

In **Kentucky**, the House Judiciary Committee has referred **HB 229** to the full House for consideration. The bill gives the Attorney General’s office concurrent jurisdiction in investigating and prosecuting human trafficking.

The **Maine** legislature is considering **HP 1020**, titled “An Act to Align the Child and Family Services and Child Protection Act.” Its aim is to change to state law so that it is in compliance with the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, Public Law 113-183.

In **Texas**, the legislature is considering **HB 2511**, which promotes voluntary efforts among the business community by creating a Human Trafficking Business Partnership program through the Office of the Secretary of State. Participating businesses may receive a certificate of recognition for participating in the partnership and engaging in practices and policies to combat human trafficking.

Advocates are hoping that, in **Washington**, **HB 2668** passes. Although there is a law on the books that allow victims of human trafficking to vacate their convictions, survivors testified that that the proposed bill would allow vacation -- even if there are other convictions -- if the crimes involved were committed as a result of being a human trafficking victim.

In **Wisconsin**, legislators have introduced **AB673** to help protect victims of stalking, domestic abuse, and human trafficking by keeping their addresses confidential. Under the proposed legislation, mail would be sent to the Department of Justice, which would then resend the mail to the actual address of the program participant. Wisconsin legislators are also considering **AB737**. That bill would expand the requirement of state agencies to investigate reports of trafficking crimes to include where the suspect is not a caregiver of the child.

**City/County Ordinances**

A group of citizens in Redding, California, drafted an ordinance which was presented to the City Council for consideration. The proposed ordinance calls for a background checks of workers in massage parlors and practices that would ensure proper licensing. Massage parlors will be charged fees that will go to assist the police department in monitoring the parlors.
**State Investigations/Arrests/Prosecutions**

**Alaska**

**January 22, 2016:** An Anchorage grand jury has charged 42-year old Terry Keehan II with three counts of second-degree sex trafficking and four counts of third-degree sex trafficking. Acting on information provided by the FBI, the Alaska Bureau of Investigation served a search warrant on Keehan's car and residence. He is alleged to have run a sex trafficking ring out of Anchorage and Wasilla. Both heroin and methamphetamine were found at his residence; the U.S. Attorney's office will be prosecuting on the drug charges.

**Arizona**

**January 20, 2016:** Fransisco Javier Rios-Covarrubias, 30, has been arrested and charged with sex trafficking of a three-year old girl. What Mesa police found when they entered the suspect's apartment after a tip from another man was so grim that resources have been made available to officers who were at the scene to deal with emotional distress. Immigration and Customs has placed a hold on the suspect.

**January 14, 2016:** Mesa police reported that they had arrested nine men in a recent child sex-trafficking sting.

**California**

**January 29, 2016:** A Fresno teen has been arrested and charged with operating a sex trafficking ring out of motels in Visalia. Eight women, ranging in age from 18 to 47, were also taken into custody.

**January 28, 2016:** Between January 18 and January 23, Los Angeles vice investigators made 198 human trafficking arrests and rescued 18 victims, 12 of them minors. Of those arrested, 115 were booked on solicitation charges.

**January 27, 2016:** In Twentynine Palms, two individuals have been arrested on suspicion of trafficking a minor. The investigation began responded to reports of a female juvenile who had been abandoned in the desert in Twentynine Palms.

**July 21, 2016:** Los Angeles police have charged Brandon Wynn, 34, with 13 felony counts including human trafficking and kidnapping, counts of human trafficking and pimping and attempted murder and assault involving the victim. The attempted murder charge involved the victim's toddler who was strapped into a car seat and left in a shed in Palmdale. He allegedly beat and doused the victim with bleach and left her stripped and naked in the desert.

**January 20, 2016:** In Los Angeles, eighteen-year old Reginald Washington has been charged with sex trafficking seven minor victims. His bail has been set at $1.9 million. He is already incarcerated on another charge.
January 19, 2016: Working with Fresno detectives on a tip involving a runaway teen, members of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force found the girl in an Anaheim hotel and have charged two individuals with human trafficking. Further investigation led police to two other men at an Anaheim hotel, where police located a 17-year old, a 14-year old, and a 15 year-old girl. Two other individuals were arrested in that case.

January 15, 2016: Mark Payton and Tasha McElrafh were taken into custody by Pomona police and booked on suspicion of human trafficking, kidnapping, pimping, pandering, and weapons violations. A woman flagged down a Pomona police officer and told him she had been kidnapped in Oklahoma City, taken to Georgia for forced prostitution, and then sold to Payton and McEllrath. She was able to get help after she was ordered to walk the street to find patrons.

January 5, 2016: A San Francisco man, Richard Scott Brooks, has been sentenced to 60 years in prison after a jury found him guilty of trafficking a 17-year old girl.

Colorado

January 26, 2016: Police in Adams County, with assistance from Homeland Security investigators, arrested ten men, including a Denver school teacher, on attempted child sex trafficking and associated charges.

January 6, 2016: A Colorado grand jury has indicted seven people accused of running a sex trafficking ring in the greater Denver area. The group is accused of recruiting three underaged girls and at least one woman and prostituting them. There are 59 counts in the indictment, including kidnapping, keeping a place of child prostitution, pimping of a child, soliciting for child prostitution, and assault with a deadly weapon as well as violations of the Colorado Organized Crime Control Act.

Connecticut

January 7, 2016: Two individuals have been arrested after an outside agency contacted Hartford police in regards to a possible kidnapping and human trafficking of an 18-year old. She was located at an apartment in Hartford and corroborated reports that she had been held against her will and sexually exploited. Dwayne Hairston, 31, and James Eric Williams, 25, were both arrested.

Florida

January 12, 2016: In Naples, two men face multiple charges after authorities uncovered a human trafficking operation following a six-month investigation. Gregory Hines, 34, and Keith Lewis, 58, are being held on a $1.8 million bond each. Four women were found and being offered services.
Georgia

January 19, 2016: Cobb County police arrested two men who they allege sold a 14-year old girl for sex. An anonymous tip led police to a motel in Marietta where the girl was being sold. Two men have been arrested and charged. One of the men has also been charged with pimping out four other women, aged 19, 22, 24, and 42.

January 12, 2016: Four people have been arrested in Clay County, a juvenile male, two women, and a man in regard to the alleged sex trafficking of a female minor. An undercover operation investigating prostitution at a hotel led to the arrests.

Illinois

January 10, 2016: James Taylor of Broadview was arrested in connection with the trafficking of a 16-year old girl. Cook County sheriff’s deputies responding to an ad on Backpage.com took the girl into custody and determined that she had been reported missing months earlier.

Kansas

January 26, 2016: In Shawnee County, a 26-year old man, Anthony Samuel Long, has been charged with 18 felonies, including aggravated human trafficking in connection with a 14-year old girl. Many of the other charges are sex offenses in which the victims are teens. Long is no stranger to the criminal courts, having been convicted for violating a protection order and domestic battery and theft; he is presently on intensive supervised probating after pleading no contest to making a criminal threat.

Maryland

January 15, 2016: Frederick police responded to information that prostitution was occurring at a local hotel. After an investigation, they determined the woman was being victimized by Christopher Jackson, 38, of Martinsburg, West Virginia. He was taken into custody and faces human trafficking and prostitution charges.

Michigan

January 13, 2016: Jacqte Beal of Grand Rapids, already in prison for violating parole, will serve 5 to 20 years for human trafficking of a minor. He will begin serving his sentence after he finishes out his sentence for first-degree criminal conduct. He had nine felony convictions when he was arrested in August on the human trafficking charge.
Minnesota

January 20, 2016: Terrell Fields, 39, pled guilty to sex trafficking and was sentenced to 13 years in prison in Stearns County. He had made numerous calls to the victim in this case who had told the prosecutor she was not going to testify. However, after the judge said he would allow into evidence the statement the victim had made to police, Fields decided to plead guilty instead of going to trial.

New Jersey

January 21, 2016: Authorities in Essex County say a North Bergen man is the first person to plead guilty under state human trafficking laws that went into effect in 2013. Charles Torres, 53, was sentenced to 20 years in prison, without the possibility for parole, for his role in trafficking a 15-year old girl.

New Mexico

January 30, 2016: One man has been arrested in Albuquerque and another man is being sought in connection with the trafficking of a 17-year old girl, arrested by Montana officials. After her arrest, she stated that she had been drugged and trafficked by Ladodrick Hogues, 29, and Stephon McDaniel, 24, who she met in late November in Albuquerque. Her mother suggested she accompany the men to sell drugs but she quickly found out that they intended to prostitute her. A woman, Phylicia Zubia, 21, accompanied her to Texas where they advertised themselves on Backpage.com. Zubia sent the money made back to Hogues in Albuquerque. Zubia was arrested in Montana and the child’s mother has been charged with human trafficking since she agreed to let her daughter sell drugs and then received money from prostitution.

New York

January 14, 2016: A Rochester man has been sentenced to time served after being convicted of trying to lure a teen-ager into sex trafficking. Tiffany St. Denis, with whom he conspired, was convicted and sentenced to 41 months in prison.

January 13, 2016: A call to police from an assistant principal at a high school has led to the arrest of a Queens woman, 42-year old Sook Yeong Park, who has been charged with labor trafficking, assault, and endangering the welfare of a child. Park allegedly brought a brother and a sister from Korea six years ago, cut off communication with the children's parents, and forced them to work both in her home and at a store. They turned over all earnings to her; she allegedly forced them to sleep on the floor and beat them when work was not done to her personal satisfaction.
North Carolina

January 21, 2016: Brunswick County sheriff’s officers have charged Willie Anderson Dock, Jr., 70, of Cherry Road, Southport, with human trafficking of an adult victim, human trafficking of a child victim, and several other related charges. He is currently in detention on drug charges.

January 20, 2016: An investigation into an alleged Johnston County sex trafficking ring has resulted in the arrest of two individuals, Jonathan Jenkins, 43, and Antoine Wallace, 29. Sheriff officials have located several victims, including a juvenile. Jenkins is a convicted murderer. This is the first time that there have been human trafficking charges filed in Johnston County.

North Dakota

January 5, 2016: Thurman Stanley, 39, was arrested by Bismarck police and charged with two counts of sexual servitude. While in prison, Stanley tried to chew off his fingerprints in an attempt to ensure that police did not discover that he is wanted in Pennsylvania for involuntary servitude. Pennsylvania police reported that Stanley is alleged to use a high level of violence to recruit and retain women to work as prostitutes.

Ohio

January 29, 2016: Monroe police arrested Aaron Kowalski, 38, on human trafficking charges. According to police spokesman, Kowalski approached a prostitute and asked her to arrange a tryst with a 12-year-old girl, who would then be drugged and knocked unconscious so he could have his way with her. This is the first human trafficking case to be prosecuted in Monroe County.

Oklahoma

January 20, 2016: When Tulsa police investigators responded to a Backpage.com advertisement for a “young looking” woman, they found a 15-year old girl at the apartment. She indicated that two individuals, Morgan Palmer, 19, and Daylin Fay, 18, were hiding in a closet. They were arrested on human trafficking charges.

South Carolina

January 15, 2016: A Columbia man, Kristopher Block, has pled guilty to human trafficking of a minor and has been sentenced to 15 years in prison. According to Attorney General Alan Wilson, Block’s case is the third human trafficking conviction under the state’s 2012 revised human trafficking law.
January 12, 2016: The Richland County Sheriff’s Department arrested Dayton Hoefer, 22, and charged him with human trafficking, kidnapping, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and possession of marijuana. The officers followed up on an advertisement posted on Backpage.com and located a 16-year old girl. The teen-ager had been reported missing since December 26.

Tennessee

January 19, 2016: The human trafficking conviction of Michael Kohlmeyer has been overturned by a Nashville judge who ruled that the evidence did not support a conviction under the current language of the law. Kohlmeyer was accused of attempting to arrange for a sexual encounter with someone between eight and sixteen years of age.

Texas

January 30, 2016: Dallas police arrested Mike Osorio and Antonio Rafael, both 19, on sex trafficking charges. According to police reports, the men allegedly contacted a 15-year old girl and a witness on Facebook and lured them to a meeting before forcing the child into acts of prostitution with up to six men a day.

January 15, 2016: In San Antonio, a 14-year old girl was lured to a party, hosted by a local rap group, by a posting on Facebook. While there, she was allegedly injected with drugs and tattooed by Jonathan Moehle, who then allowed his friends to sexually abuse her. Moehle, associated with a local rap group, Greedy Gang, whose lyrics include references to “taking turns” with women, was arrested and charged with sex trafficking.

Washington

January 7, 2015: A joint operation between Bellevue police and the King County Sheriff’s Office led to the seizure of the website TheReviewboard.net and a sister site called kgirldelights.com, with the “K” standing for Korea. King County prosecutors received a court order directing godaddy.com to close the websites after an investigation revealed that at least twelve brothels in the Bellevue area, run out of high end apartments, were connected to the websites. Investigators allege that women were brought illegally from South Korea and victimized in 15 U.S. states. Twelve women were recovered and nine people have been arrested. Most of those arrested were members of a group, called “The League,” which ran the brothels.

Wisconsin

January 20, 2016: A Lodi man, Maurice Withers, 26, has been charged with two counts of sex trafficking a minor and one count of attempted sex trafficking. He is accused of driving the victim from Wisconsin to Nevada with the intent of prostituting her.
January 12, 2016: A human trafficking investigation in Milwaukee has led to the closure of three suburban massage parlors and the arrest of three individuals on human trafficking and related charges. One of the individuals, Quimei Zhang, has fled to China. The owner of the parlors, John Sherman and his wife, Fengquing Sherman, will appear in court in April.

Wyoming

January 12, 2016: Wyoming Highway patrol officers responded to a call about a domestic disturbance in an automobile. The officers pulled in behind the car at a Shell Station and a young woman mouthed the words “help me” to the officers. Further investigation revealed that the women had left Philadelphia with Lester Tucker and Janice Scott who had promised to take them to California for jobs. However, it soon became clear that the couple intended to prostitute them. Tucker and Scott were arrested and charged with first degree human trafficking.

News of General Interest

Attorneys General offices throughout the country commemorated Human Trafficking Awareness Month in a number of ways. The following news accounts are examples of the ways that the Attorneys General are tackling the crime.

● With the College Football Playoff National Championship playing in the state early this month, Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich kicked off an anti-human trafficking awareness campaign. Two giant billboards towering over New York City’s Times Square and a third billboard in Glendale featured the Attorney General’s message: “Paying for sex can get you flagged for the rest of your life.”

● California Attorney General Kamala Harris announced that her office, in partnership with Truckers Against Trafficking, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of California and the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office, hosted a training to equip the trucking industry and law enforcement with the tools to identify suspected traffickers.

● In Indiana, Attorney General Greg Zoeller and his staff held a training for the Hamilton County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) on how to identify and respond to human trafficking.

● Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healy emphasized her office’s commitment to continue fighting against the exploitation of citizens of Massachusetts, emphasizing that so often human trafficking victimizes children.

● Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette held the state’s Human Trafficking Commission meeting in January. The Commission recommended several changes to the legislature, including increasing the maximum sentence for a convicted trafficker to fifteen years and allowing expert witnesses to testify at human trafficking trials.
Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt posted informational alerts on human trafficking on social media during the week of January 11.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton announced that his office is forming a new unit dedicated to fighting human trafficking. The unit will be headed by Kirsta Leeburg Melton, a former prosecutor in the Bexar District Attorney's office and one of the founders of Truckers Against Trafficking and will focus not only on investigations and prosecutions but also on training and community awareness.

In his statement commemorating Human Trafficking Awareness Month, Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes noted the importance of a collaborative effort by local communities, law enforcement, and first responders in tackling human trafficking.

Wisconsin Attorney General Brad Schimel vowed to tackle both the demand and the perpetrators of sex trafficking. He also visited the Sojourner Family Peace Center in Milwaukee and noted the work it is doing to combat violence in the community, including the violence connected to human trafficking.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics has published a new study, “Identifying Effective Counter-Trafficking Programs and Practices in the U.S.: Legislative, Legal, and Public Opinion Strategies that Work.” Written under a grant by researchers at Northeastern University, the study is divided into three parts: valuating how state anti-trafficking statues impact human trafficking arrests and prosecutions; analyzing state human trafficking cases; and assessing public opinion on human trafficking. One of the study’s conclusions was that harsher penalties for human trafficking offenses do not necessarily mean more human trafficking investigations and prosecutions.

The Polaris Project has issued its 2015 report. Key facts include that the Hotline received 22,269 messages through calls, webforms, emails, and SMS messages. Of these, 5,973 referenced potential cases of human trafficking. The report also noted that human trafficking was occurring in all 50 states.

A new book by an RTI International senior research scientist argues that the current approach to domestic child sex trafficking does not fully focus on the needs of young people who are caught up in the sex industry.

A new report by the Department of Homeland Security found that half of the 32 known human trafficking cases involved the use of work or fiancé visas. The IG also found that family reunification visas also might have been used to bring in trafficking victims. The IG reported that the US Citizenship and Immigrations Services (USCIS) did not always store the names of those receiving the visas and share them with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The report stated: “Our review of USCIS case files identified instances where children who were sold, brought to the United States, and forced into involuntary servitude named the perpetrator as well as other potential victims in their T visa application.”
Nashville, Tennessee, has started a special human trafficking court that will allow victims who are defendants in criminal cases to have those cases dismissed and expunged upon completion of a program that includes drug treatment and counseling.

The San Diego library system has had all of its 800 employees undertake a 2-hour training program on the signs that someone may be a human trafficking victim.

A recent Rand study, published in Child Abuse & Neglect, analyzed the efficacy of nine states’ safe harbor laws. The study found that the laws, alone, were insufficient without necessary funding to provide services for the victimized young people.

The Washington Post ran an article regarding the mass influx of undocumented minors who crossed the border in 2014. Six of those children ended up being among the victims rescued in the labor trafficking case surrounding an egg farm in Ohio. A U.S. Senate hearing is being conducted regarding the failure to adequately document the homes to which some of the children were sent. A spokesman for the Department for Health and Human Services noted that, once the children are placed with sponsors, it is up to state officials to ensure their well-being.

CHTCS (Count Human Trafficking Compliance Solutions) has inaugurated a new quarterly newsletter. CHTCS provides assistance to corporations mitigate risk within their global supply chain.

The Christian Science Monitor highlighted six promising practices to counter labor trafficking in the United States.

Rhode Island has issued a new state-wide protocol for assisting human trafficking victims.