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.

May 2014

News from AG Offices

Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi applauded the passage by the Florida House of HB 7141. Among other things, it would establish a Statewide Council of Human Trafficking within the Attorney General’s Office. For more information about Florida legislative activity, see below.

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt hosted the Midwestern meeting of Attorneys General in Lawrence, Kansas, last month. Focused on human trafficking, the meeting brought together Attorneys General and their representatives from seven states who heard from experts in the field about the progress made by states in tackling the issue as well as hurdles that remain and steps that need to be taken.

Federal Legislative Activity

The House Ways and Means Committee approved bipartisan legislation to prevent and address sex trafficking of youth in foster care. HR 4058 would amend Part E (Foster Care and Adoption Assistance) of Title IV of the Social Security Act (SSA) to require state plans for foster care and adoption assistance demonstrate policies and procedures for identifying and screening children (and for determining appropriate state action and services) whom the state has reasonable cause to believe are victims of sex trafficking or are at risk of being such victims.

The House Judiciary Committee voted out three bills to combat human trafficking. HR 3530, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, would boost support and protection for domestic human trafficking victims and strengthen federal laws to ensure that buyers as well as sellers engaged in sex trafficking are held accountable. The Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act, HR 3610, provides for both incentives to states to adopt safe harbor laws and an avenue for victims to access job skill training. The Stop Advertising Victims of
Exploitation (SAVE) Act, HR 4225, criminalizes those who knowingly advertise or profit from advertisements that offer commercial exploitation of minors and trafficking victims.

**State Legislative Activity**

**Arizona:** Governor Jan Brewer signed into law HB 2454. It establishes an affirmative defense for sex trafficking victims charged with prostitution and increases the penalty for "Johns" who solicit underage girls.

**California:** The Senate approved SB 939, which, if passed into law, would streamline prosecution of human trafficking charges by consolidating serial human trafficking, pimping, and pandering charges into a single trial if all affected jurisdictions agree. This would reduce the trauma of victims who often must testify against their trafficker in a number of jurisdictions.

Also in California, SB 1388 has been introduced to address demand. It would establish minimum fines and penalties to the buyer of commercial sex and increase penalties for the buyer of sex from a minor. Fines collected would be deposited into the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Services Fund, which would be created in the State Treasury. These moneys would be available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for the purpose of funding child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse victim counseling centers and programs that fund services for child victims of human trafficking.

**Delaware:** SB 197 has been introduced into the Senate. Based in part on the Uniform Act on the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking, if enacted into law, it would increase penalties for traffickers, establish new protective measures for victims and provide an opportunity for victims to expunge crimes, such as prostitution, associated with trafficking. It also imposes stricter penalties on those who purchase commercial sex. It has received the backing of Attorney General Beau Biden.

**Florida:** The House has passed two bills that target human trafficking. They are a part of the legislature’s Work Plan 2014 “Protecting Florida’s Vulnerable” initiative. HB 989 increases penalties for traffickers and offers greater protections and assistance to victims. It also removes the statute of limitations for human trafficking offenses. HB 7141 expands on the 2012 Safe Harbor Act, which treats those who have been trafficked as victims, not criminals. If it becomes law, it will require regulations that will ensure that the Department of Children and Families and other community groups providing child services have the proper tools to respond to children who have been victimized.

**Hawaii:** HB 1926 was passed out of conference committee last month. If enacted, it will provide harsher penalties for patrons of sex trafficking and establish enhanced sentences for repeat offenders who promote prostitution or solicit sex from children. It is now on the Governor’s desk for his signature.

**Iowa:** Governor Terry Branstad signed into law SF 2311. Among other things, the new law removes offenses from the records of anyone previously convicted of prostitution as a
minor and increases the penalty for pimping involving a minor. It also establishes an additional fine for traffickers. Money collected will go towards a victims’ fund. Finally, it authorizes the Attorney General’s office to apply for an order authorizing wire tapping in human trafficking investigations.

**New Hampshire:** The House voted unanimously for [SB 317](#) which makes prostituting minors a felony, provides protection from prosecution for juveniles who have been trafficked, and makes it a felony to force a person to engage in sex or labor acts against his or her will. It also allows victims of traffickers to sue for damages. It has now been sent back to the Senate to consider an amendment. The Senate earlier had unanimously passed the bill. One of the interesting provisions is that the state’s victim compensation fund will pay for the removal of victims’ tattoos and brands. The bill is the product of [Attorney General Joseph Foster’s Task Force on Human Trafficking](#).

**Oklahoma:** Three bills addressing human trafficking are awaiting the Governor’s signature. [SB 1433](#) would add human trafficking to the list of crimes that require inmates to serve at least 85 percent of their sentences before becoming eligible for parole. Under [SB 1431](#), those convicted of human trafficking for commercial sex would be required to register as sex offenders. Finally, [SB 1538](#) would make it easier for a victim of human trafficking to sue the trafficker by delaying the start of the statute of limitations until the time the victim “discovers or reasonably should have discovered that he or she was a victim.”

**Rhode Island:** The House passed [H7916](#) last month. If enacted into law, the bill would increase jail time for sex predators to 50 years and anyone found guilty of interfering with or obstructing enforcement of sex trafficking laws would face 35 years of imprisonment and an increased fine. The bill has received the support of [Attorney General Peter F. Kilmartin](#).

**Wisconsin:** Governor Scott Walker signed into law [SB 492](#), which had been developed with the help of [Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen](#). The new law creates additional protection for human trafficking victims and gives law enforcement new ways to go after perpetrators.

**State Investigations/Arrests/Prosecutions**

**Arizona:** Several local and federal law enforcement agencies joined with the [Yavapai County Sheriff’s Office](#) last month to target buyers of child prostitutes. Responding to ads placed on the Internet by law enforcement, seven men who thought they were to have sex with underage girls were arrested.

**California:** In a reverse sting operation, [Anaheim police](#) arrested Dwight Lamith Garris after he responded to a Facebook posting. He is accused of trying to get the “teen” to work for him as a prostitute and to recruit others. He has pled not guilty to one count each of human trafficking of a minor, pandering, and pimping of a minor.
James Conley was convicted last month in Long Beach Superior Court of nine counts, including human trafficking, relating to charges that he forced a juvenile into sex trafficking. Conley was a part of a multi-million dollar pimping operation that controlled a prostitution track from Long Beach into Compton. The crimes were committed over a course of three years and involved three juveniles between the ages of 15 and 17. Sentencing is scheduled for June.

**Florida:** A North Miami Beach man, David Lopez, was arrested last month and charged on two counts each of human trafficking, producing a minor for prostitution, and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. He is accused of targeting girls from a nearby high school.

On the first night of a sweeping prostitution sting in and around Orlando, law enforcement arrested an alleged sex trafficker who was introducing a 14-year old girl into the world of sex trafficking. Gregory Foster was charged with kidnapping, human trafficking, and drug charges when he showed up at a motel with the teen and found law enforcement instead of a customer. In all, 44 people were arrested in the three-day operation.

An Orange County Sheriff's deputy who noticed a woman get out of a car with two men in the front seat was instrumental in discovering that she was a victim of human trafficking. Police have located and arrested the driver of the car, but the trafficker is still at large.

**Louisiana:** The trial of a Lafayette woman is scheduled to begin the first of this month. Katherine Vidrine was arrested last June after a weeks-long investigation of the prostitution of a child younger than 12 years.

**Maine:** A Sidney father and his son, Fredrick Horne Sr. and Jr., have been charged with promotion of sex trafficking. The Hornes’ business was known as “Adam & Eve” escort service. The same day in an unrelated incident, law enforcement in Litchfield arrested Gretchen Patrick on similar charges. She is alleged to have run an escort business out of her mobile home.

**Maryland:** In April, Gary Eugene Maddox was found guilty by a Howard County jury on two counts of human trafficking. Sentencing will be held in August. He was arrested after a woman from Rhode Island contacted police and alleged that Maddox and his girl friend, Amina Philip, befriended her and offered to employ her to sell various items. Instead, they drove her to Maryland where they threatened to kill her if she did not prostitute herself. Pictures of her were posted on Backpage.com. Philip pled guilty to one count of prostitution and was sentenced to time served.

**Minnesota:** In January, a St. Paul man, Otis Washington, was sentenced to 40 years in prison for sex trafficking. Washington must also register as a predatory offender. Washington, his brother, and their two uncles were convicted last year of running a sex-trafficking ring that used physical, sexual, and mental abuse to control and coerce girls and women, many of whom had mental health issues.
**North Carolina:** In an investigation that dates back to 2009, law enforcement officials in *Winston-Salem* report that 40 people have been arrested across North Carolina in cases connected to prostitution and human trafficking. The victims have been identified as five foreign nationals, including one minor.

**New York:** A Rhode Island man, John Hammond, pled guilty in an *Albany County Court* to attempted sex trafficking. He faces two to six years in state prison when sentenced in June. He admitted to providing drugs to a woman to impair her judgment.

Eric Oliver was sentenced last month in *Syracuse* to six to twelve years in state prison for leading a prostitution ring that forced girls as young as 15 years into the sex trade. At sentencing, Oliver’s lawyer wanted to ensure that his understanding that the offense did not fall under the sex offender registration act was correct. Without argument, the judge pronounced sentence. However, the Attorney General’s office has stated that New York sex trafficking was a sex crime under state law.

**Oklahoma:** In *Warr Acres*, Joshua Hudson pled guilty to trafficking a 16-year old pregnant girl. He then withdrew the plea and pled guilty to a reduced charge of violating the computer crimes act. He completed a prison boot camp and, on sentencing, was given a deferred sentence of eight years’ probation.

A Kansas City, Missouri, man, Demetric Jackson was arrested in *Tulsa* on human trafficking charges involving a girl who had connected with him on Backpage.com. His victim told police that Jackson took all the money from her “dates” and routinely provided her with drugs. He is in the Tulsa jail in lieu of a $200,000 bail.

**Oregon:** When *Beaverton* police observed a couple dropping off a teen-ager at a Comfort Inn, they pulled the car, a Ford Crown Victoria, over. The driver of the car, Davonte Donahue, then sped away and a police chase ensued. The car eventually crashed into three vehicles, went into a wall and then into a ditch. Both Davonte and his wife, Torri, were taken to the hospital for minor injuries and arrested. The girl told police that she was forcibly prostituted by the Donahues for two months and that they knew she was 17 years old.

**Pennsylvania:** Anthony Brooks was charged with human trafficking by the *Bucks County District Attorney’s Office* for allegedly physically forcing at least one of two teen-aged girls into prostitution. Another victim was a 21-year old woman.

**Texas:** A domestic disturbance call from a motel in *San Antonio* led to the arrest of Shon Steen for human trafficking. The victim’s mother had filed a missing person’s report. Steen allegedly advertised her on a website.

**Utah:** Two recent human trafficking arrests in Utah highlight the increased attention to the crime. Tara Pinnock and Jean Joseph are accused of forcing a kidnapped woman from New York into a cross-country trek of prostitution before the 23-year-old finally escaped in *Salt Lake City*. The victim has been placed in protective custody. Pinnock, who has been
accused of arranging clients for the victim, had been arrested earlier this year in Connecticut as part of an effort to crack down on prostitution before the Super Bowl.

**Articles of General Interest**

The [National Association of Counties](https://www.naco.org) released a survey on sex trafficking. Eighty-six percent of larger counties reported that trafficking is a problem with 48 percent of those counties reporting that it is a major problem. The survey also looked at whether counties observed an increase in the trafficking of children and whether there appeared to be a link between sex trafficking and minor children who have been in the foster care system.

Lad Lake, an organization that serves at-risk youths in [Wisconsin](https://www.wisconsin.gov) has teamed up with the state Department of Children and Families to create the first specialized residential program in the state for girls who have been victims of sex trafficking. Currently, five girls are enrolled in the one-year program.

The [Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science](https://www.aaaps.org) published an article last month titled "Conflict and Agency Among Sex Workers and Pimps." The authors state that, based on interviews with pimps, underage prostitutes, and customers, the portrayal of pimps luring girls into prostitution is inaccurate. Instead, the authors state that, 57 percent of the time, minors were initiated into the sex trade by girls their own age.

The dark side of the [North Dakota oil boom](https://www.nd.gov) is detailed in a recent article that talks about the increase in sex trafficking and domestic violence.