



STATEMENT OF

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Introduction

Chairwoman McSally, Ranking Member Vela, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts to combat human trafficking, and the risk it poses to victims and the national security of the United States. I am here today to discuss the Department's Blue Campaign and the importance of its awareness and outreach efforts to combat human trafficking. On behalf of the Secretary and the more than 230,000 men and women of DHS, I thank this Committee for its continued dedication to this issue, including the passage of the *Blue Campaign Authorization Act*, which was signed into law by President Trump on February 14, 2018.

Human trafficking is a heinous crime. Traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to compel their victims into labor or commercial sex. Human trafficking is an exploitation-based crime and movement of the victim is not required, unlike with migrant smuggling. Individuals may be considered trafficking victims regardless of whether they were born into a state of servitude, were transported to the exploitative situation, previously consented to work for a trafficker, or participated in a crime as a direct result of being subjected to human trafficking. Victims of human trafficking have the potential to be exploited in their own communities within the United States. This is why combating human trafficking continues to be a priority for the Department.

Through the Blue Campaign and ongoing efforts of many DHS Components, DHS raises public awareness about trafficking in persons, leveraging partnerships to educate the public to recognize human trafficking and report suspected instances. The Blue Campaign works closely with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC), and other DHS Components, to create general awareness training and materials for law enforcement and others to increase detection of human trafficking, and to identify victims. Working in collaboration with first responders, governmental, non-governmental and private sector organizations, the Blue Campaign magnifies this important, national public outreach.

Combating and preventing trafficking in persons begins with understanding the threat. This is why the mission of the Blue Campaign is so vital.

Blue Campaign

The Blue Campaign was created by DHS in 2010 as a national awareness campaign to: (1) educate the public, law enforcement and other institutions on human trafficking in the United States; and (2) to increase understanding of the indicators of human trafficking, and to appropriately recognize and respond to possible cases of human trafficking. Housed in the DHS Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE), the Blue Campaign works to facilitate information sharing across the Department in order to support and enhance our ongoing work to fight modern day slavery.

The Blue Campaign has leveraged existing OPE partnerships with other federal entities, the private sector and State/local/tribal/territorial authorities to maximize national public engagement on anti-human trafficking efforts. The Blue Campaign is well positioned to speak to the Department's commitment to anti-human trafficking efforts, provide consistent, timely and accurate information to the general public, and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of its awareness products.

President Trump signed the *Blue Campaign Authorization Act* into law on February 14, 2018, officially codifying the program within the Department. The authorization allows the program to mature by solidifying Blue Campaign objectives, including awareness training for Department personnel and other Federal, State, tribal, territorial, and law enforcement officials (as appropriate), and supporting its ability to leverage partnerships with State and local governmental, non-governmental, and private sector organizations to raise public awareness of human trafficking.¹ The multifaceted program includes oversight of the Department's anti-trafficking interagency engagement, employee and external training course development, public awareness portfolios and external outreach.

Interagency Engagement

As part of the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (PITF), which is a cabinet-level entity created by the *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act* of 2000, DHS works collaboratively with its federal counterparts to ensure victims are protected and traffickers are brought to justice. Specifically, the Blue Campaign works closely with 15 agencies across the federal government responsible for coordinating U.S. government-wide efforts to combat trafficking in persons. As the Blue Campaign Chair, I represent DHS on the Senior Policy Operating Group (SPOG), established by the *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act* in 2003. The SPOG consists of senior officials designated as representatives of the PITF agencies² and works to ensure a whole-of-government approach to address all aspects of human trafficking.

DHS works jointly with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to provide human trafficking training and information to aviation personnel through the Blue Lightning Initiative (BLI). BLI, led by CBP and DOT, is an element of the Blue Campaign. The BLI creates training tools that allow airline personnel to identify potential human trafficking situations and to report their suspicions to law enforcement. To date, more than 100,000 airline personnel in the aviation industry have been trained through BLI, and actionable tips continue to be reported to law enforcement.³

Lastly, the Blue Campaign frequently collaborates with other federal agencies for public awareness opportunities, such as the Department of Labor engaging in a recent social media engagement, and the Department of Health and Human Services in resource sharing (photographs) and a Blue Campaign-facilitated panel event.

Employee Training

The *Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015* (JVTA) contains provisions mandating that DHS implement human trafficking training for relevant personnel to identify human trafficking. The JVTA requires that the Department train and periodically retrain relevant Transportation Security

¹H.R.4708 "Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign Authorization Act".

² The President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (PITF) is a cabinet-level entity created by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, which consists of some 15 agencies across the federal government responsible for coordinating U.S. government-wide efforts to combat trafficking in persons - <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/response/usg/index.htm>

³ The "FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act of 2016," signed by the President on July 15, 2016, requires air carriers to provide initial and annual flight attendant training regarding recognizing and responding to potential human trafficking victims. <https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/human-trafficking/blue-lightning>.

Administration (TSA), CBP, and other Department personnel that the Secretary considers appropriate, with respect to how to effectively deter, detect, and disrupt human trafficking, and, where appropriate, interdict a suspected perpetrator of human trafficking.⁴

The Secretary determined that training of DHS personnel on human trafficking is critical to the Department's anti-human trafficking efforts. Therefore, the Secretary has determined that, in addition to TSA and CBP, certain employees of all operational Components, particularly those employees in law enforcement and with public facing roles, should be required to receive human trafficking training and periodic retraining pursuant to the JVTA. Each Component is responsible for identifying relevant employees who should receive this training, in consultation with the DHS Blue Campaign. Of the identified DHS employees, over 100,000 have completed human trafficking training.

Pursuant to the JVTA, training is accomplished through in-class or virtual learning capabilities, and includes training that is most appropriate for a particular location or environment in which the personnel receiving such training perform their official duties.

External Training

The Blue Campaign and DHS Components, such as FLETC, ICE, and USCIS, regularly provide training to State, local, territorial and tribal law enforcement communities, and other organizations throughout the United States and abroad. The Blue Campaign focuses on awareness training whereas the operational components, such as ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), provide training specific to investigations.

The Blue Campaign has worked to enhance awareness and training for different groups likely to encounter trafficking victims, including law enforcement, industry, and government employees. In conjunction with FLETC, Blue Campaign works to produce educational, scenario videos that depict indicators of human trafficking. DHS also works closely with survivors of human trafficking when developing these videos.

In 2018, the Blue Campaign launched a new Human Trafficking and Native Communities video. This video depicts what human trafficking can look like in Native communities, including recruiting tactics used by traffickers. The video ends with a comprehensive overview of how to recognize and report human trafficking.⁵ Through its efforts to engage survivors of trafficking, the Blue Campaign has prioritized working with Native American and Native Alaskan communities to provide culturally relevant information on the risks of human trafficking.

Additionally, the Blue Campaign conducted two webinars for law enforcement in fiscal year (FY) 2018, one addressing the unique challenges to combating human trafficking in Native communities, presented by FLETC and a human trafficking survivor, and one covering trauma-informed interview techniques, presented by FLETC and ICE HSI. A combined 82 law enforcement professionals

⁴ Section 902(a) of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (JVTA) relates to the training of Department of Homeland Security personnel to identify human trafficking.

⁵ Blue Campaign scenario videos are located within the resource section on the campaign webpage <https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/videos>.

attended the webinars. This was a testbed for our new law enforcement virtual engagement and it was met with positive feedback and determined successful.

Public Awareness Portfolio

Beginning in FY 2018, the Blue Campaign started to leverage social media as a platform to engage the general public. Since its launch in January 2018, the Blue Campaign's Twitter account has secured more than 46,000 followers. Subsequent social media engagements have resulted in constructive information sharing with corporate partners, such as Amtrak and Delta Airlines. The Blue Campaign continues to host national awareness events, such as its annual "Wear Blue Day" on National Human Trafficking Awareness Day (January 11). "Wear Blue Day" encourages the American public to wear blue, signifying awareness and commitment to ending human trafficking.

Moreover, the Blue Campaign implements a robust annual advertising strategy, to include digital advertising. Results have increased views to valuable human trafficking information with over 830,000 visits to the Blue Campaign website, and 4.5 million social media interactions. Additionally, Blue Campaign secures out-of-home advertising in geographic locations surrounding large events. This includes ad placements in Minneapolis, Minnesota during the 2018 Super Bowl, obtaining 9.2 million impressions. Public Service Announcements (PSA) are also a part of the Blue Campaign's efforts to call attention to this issue. PSAs are a useful tool to emphasize key national security and safety issues, and drive a call to action, directing the public to appropriate reporting mechanisms. In 2018, the Campaign prioritized forced labor as a focus area to generate increased responsiveness. The Campaign created a PSA, "Neighborhood Watch," which in six months, was placed almost 30,000 times and obtained more than 689 million impressions.

Moving forward, the Blue Campaign will continue to provide and grow its quality public awareness services. The Campaign will assess advertising and outreach strategies to ensure effectiveness and innovation remain at the forefront of shedding light on this important national safety issue.

Public Awareness Campaign Efficacy

It is difficult to measure the efficacy of a public awareness campaign, especially one addressing a historically underreported and hidden crime. By arming the public and frontline employees across various industries with information about how to recognize and report human trafficking, Blue Campaign is creating eyes and ears across the country on the lookout for signs of human trafficking and giving individuals the resources to call the appropriate authorities or get help. By growing Blue Campaign's social media presence in 2018, DHS has developed communication channels that deliver nearly daily messages about human trafficking.

The Blue Campaign also actively works to engage survivor voices in its work. As a result of resources provided by the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime, when developing new public awareness resources, the Blue Campaign was able to secure survivor consultants from the National Survivor Network and U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking to provide input on the accuracy of imagery and effectiveness of messages. Survivors have consulted on Blue Campaign's most recent public service announcement, "Neighborhood Watch," and public

awareness and victim self-identification posters.

Additionally, the Blue Campaign conducted an advertising saturation exercise in Reno, Nevada from May – July 2018 that resulted in eight calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline.⁶ A digital and out-of-home (billboards, baggage claim signage, scoreboard signage and taxi toppers) strategy was created to maximize public awareness and drive calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in the geographic area. Digital click-to-call ads were used to track when a direct connection was made between a Blue Campaign effort and a potentially viable call that could have helped a victim of human trafficking connect to needed assistance. These call-only ads appear in search results on mobile devices, with the goal to get a user to click the phone number displayed in the ad.

External Outreach

Outreach and partnerships are essential parts of the Blue Campaign’s efforts to ensure interested organizations have the necessary tools to bring awareness to the crime of human trafficking. Many organizations are interested in bringing awareness to their stakeholders in an effort to combat human trafficking in their industry. Partnerships increased in the last year with a wide variety of organizations, including a statewide partnership with the State of Nevada, Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles, Asian American Hotel Owners Association and Allied Universal Security.

The Campaign receives many relevant inquiries to the Blue Campaign inbox, but also conducts proactive outreach to organizations that could have a substantial impact on raising awareness within its industry or with the public.

As a Blue Campaign partner, organizations have access to the Campaign support team, training and resources, speaking and event opportunities (both hosted by the Blue Campaign, and to have Blue Campaign personnel present at partner-hosted events), co-branded Blue Campaign materials, human trafficking awareness materials, and receive the Blue Campaign e-newsletter.

While formal partnerships assist the Blue Campaign with sharing critical information in the fight to end human trafficking, they are not necessary to access valuable resources available on the Blue Campaign website. The Blue Campaign produces a wide variety of human trafficking awareness materials including toolkits, posters, indicator cards and more. The Blue Campaign’s comprehensive portfolio of all publications and materials is available for download and print from the Blue Campaign at no cost.

Conclusion

The Blue Campaign recognizes that awareness efforts play a vital role in ensuring the public is able to recognize the crime and provide valuable information to law enforcement. The Blue Campaign is becoming a leading voice in socializing the indicators of human trafficking so that the public can

⁶ The Blue Campaign advertising saturation exercise in Reno, Nevada was conducted in conjunction with State/local stakeholders and the National Human Trafficking Hotline <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>.

recognize and report suspected incidents of the crime, ensuring victims know how to connect with the resources they need to escape their trafficking situation and begin to rebuild their lives.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to testify today on this important issue. I look forward to answering your questions.