



WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF JACQUELYN ALUOTTO

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT: NO TRAFFICKING ZONE, INC (NTZ)

Human Trafficking Specialist, Advocate, and Community Awareness
Coordinator:
(HTRA) Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance Of The Southern District.

House Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security

Hearing on Oversight of Federal Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking
April 27, 2022

Dear Chairwoman Lee, Ranking Member Biggs, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you to the Members of the Subcommittee and the Chairwoman and Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee. I am honored to be here today to testify about the Oversight of Federal Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking. I am representing No Trafficking Zone, Inc (NTZ) and all the victims, survivor leaders, and families, I am blessed to fight for and serve. I hope my testimony will help you understand, how and why greed, corruption, power, and a lack of knowledge and truth of this intricate crime is reeking havoc on our nation. The effects it has on our society and it's victims and their family is at a pandemic level. Human trafficking is a 150 billion dollar annual illicit industry. The oil industry and nike combined does generate this revenue annually.

No Trafficking Zone has been successful in creating and amending legislation that prevents and combats human trafficking. Most recently, in 2021 SB 1831 the No Trafficking Zone Act passed unanimously in the state of Texas. An Alarming Fact: Did you know that 55% of trafficked adults say they were first introduced to trafficking (groomed or solicited) on Texas school campuses?

NTZ is a non-partisan, non-profit whose mission is to prevent, combat, and eradicate human trafficking by creating no trafficking zones through out the world. This takes unity, mobilization, training, collaboration, intelligence, legislation, and education. <https://www.notrafficking-zone.org/>

But first, let me tell you what led me to the anti human trafficking movement two decades ago. As a child, I watched my young single Mother struggle to make ends meet. We lived in a one

bedroom basement apartment after her and my father divorced. I remember at a young age I would watch my Mother struggle and cry. I always thought that I could make my Mother happy if I loved her more than myself. I thought it was my job to take care of my family. My Mother's depression had grown and she was desperate to get better. People did not talk about mental health or the cycle of abuse. The health care industry was not using words such as trauma, yet alone providing trauma informed care. In fact, my Mother lost parts of her memory to these barbaric procedures and practices that damaged her more than helped her. She was re-victimized and re-traumatized in ways that she could never forget. She was told she was broken and these procedure would fix her. That she would be put back together. When she resurfaced after treatment, she worse than ever. She would have nightmares of being pinned down and electrocuted daily. She understood they were experimented on her and she had no choice. Her anxiety was worse than ever. Xanax became my Mothers best friend and companion. Of course prescribed by the same doctors who told her she was not "fixable" after her treatments. Which is the worse thing any person can hear. She had suffered a different type of torture and abuse from the "health care" experts and they blamed her for not responding the way they wanted her too. You can not have an agenda when you serve people. You must just serve and advocate for them. She was told shock therapy on her brain would cure her from wanting to commit suicide. She was desperate to get better for my siblings and I. To this day my heart breaks thinking about my Mother being in a straight jacket with a doctor telling her that electrocuting her brain for months would cure her depression. The insanity of this theory came from our health care industry. Hundreds of thousands of these draconian procedure were performed on desperate people who were seeking help from the most renowned doctors in our nation. We are still providing barbaric practices and procedures to this very day. Not every thing can be read in a book. You do need evidence based care and to understand that every human and trauma is different.

Sex trafficking survivors are suffering from complex trauma and need the most advanced understanding of why this trauma occurs the way it does. We need help and resources that still do not exist. We are just scratching the surface on trauma from the sex slave trade. You can not read books for this kind of trauma and behavior patterns and think you can cohesively work with survivors. You have to see it up close. It must be understood and have many encounters since every trafficking survivor is different. You must experience the stages of trauma and change victims will go through. It is a unique language as it is a very intricate crime. We must recognize this. We must meet every survivor where they are. I see professionals in many fields that handle trafficking survivors almost resentful that they are not "cooperating" like they should. I see it with doctors, law enforcement, advocates, social workers, organizations, hospitals, schools, shelters, and the list goes on and on. I recognize this frustration with victim service workers, when survivors do not respond the way they want them to or how they think they should. I have been on many undercover human trafficking operations. I have seen law enforcement become frustrated and angry when a victim is not responding the way law enforcement wants or expects. We are expecting broken people to not act broken. To act the way we

think they should. This is not “trauma appropriate”. This term I coined myself. After being on so many operations with trauma informed law enforcement and their victim center approached. I realized they have come a long way but also have a long way to go. They really can not be trauma appropriate. First of all they did not study trauma for sex trafficking. They do not know how to respond. In all honesty most advocates, survivor leaders, over comers, nurses, social workers, and people do not know how to respond to a recovered survivor. They can relate but to really meet someone where they are and then to understand that this process will change everyday. Much like symptoms of grief. One minute you are fine and the next minute the pain is unbearable. It is ever-changing and all consuming. What happens is law enforcement or victim service providers will blame the survivor instead of saying he or she is not ready and or we are doing something wrong. Instead the blame shifts to the victims and that is how they will be re-victimized and re-traumatized. It is a lack of understanding and fear from professionals that do not understand the magnitude of this crime. We all need to go back to the drawing board. I remember every time my Mother tried to hurt herself or take a pill to numb her pain. I resented her for not recognizing the stability and love I poured into her everyday. I resented myself at the same time because my love was not good enough for my Mother to want to live. At the time I did not understand complex trauma and what that can look and sound like. I took it personal. I did not understand that my Mother was surviving and doing the best she could. Her behaviors and patterns came from trauma. I am still learning. We will all be students for the rest of our lives learning of the residual effects this world has had on all of us. I did not know what trauma could look and feel like. Now we explain and know what triggers are. We understand coping skills. We are making progress.

We have come very far in how we treat and support trafficking survivors but we are still just scratching the surface. We need to study the effects of colonialism, slavery, severe sexual violence, oppression, stockholm syndrome, post traumatic stress disorder, violence, social isolation, identity stripping, emotional detachment, hyper vigilance, addiction, pushing boundaries, self esteem, complex trauma, and other mental health conditions. In addition, we need more studies on the effects of pornography being watched by children. Data is showing us the average age for children being introduced to pornography is eight years old. We also understand pornography has become more and more violent. We also know from studies from science and doctors that this is changing the chemistry in children’s brain as their brains will not fully develop until twenty five. We have seen that little girls view sexual violence against themselves as normal and that is what love is. We see how boys learn that girls like strangulation during sex and violence. That is how they should express love. It also has children experimenting with sex and sexual acts in a much younger way. If you are sexual assault victim there is a higher chance to become a trafficking victim. We need to look at the gaming industry and understands the manipulation happening by predators with games online. We need to study what social media and the technology platforms are doing to over sexualizing women and girls. The constant sexual and violent images as being cool. The games where cartoons are raping each other or

dancing on a pool. All these images and behaviors being normalized by a cartoon characters every day. This does not include virtual reality. That is where they have the crimes and victimization acted out. We are all being “systematic groomed” by companies and especially tech companies who are making billions of dollars off of toxic and hostile content. We are all being groomed. Groomed to accept old men with young women or girls. Our healthy boundaries are being pushed and remolded by a “ Greed Agenda” and a ‘Perverved Power Agenda”. That is why our youth dress so different that it did from fifty, thirty, and ten years ago. The boundaries of letting a child leave the house almost naked used to be unheard of. Thirty years ago that would not be the norm. Media comes in all shapes and forms. Big tech and Hollywood have teamed up together to mold and entertain our children as they make a profit on our societal destruction. We do not understand all of these manipulations and mental health conditions being created by these factors. That is also why we do not understand the proper after care that survivors need. Imagine your “predator” still being able to get to you everyday and in all different forms on tech devices. Imagine being told this is your fault. Imagine watching your rapists profit off of your rape while your government fights for the predators rights. These are some reasons why survivors go back to “the life” or “the game” and sometimes never return. Below are articles on the money Hollywood and Big Tech are making together. Please understand social media is media. The difference is the players are society and our children.

<https://techcrunch.com/2018/06/28/big-tech-companies-are-looking-at-hollywood-as-the-next-stage-in-their-play-for-the-cloud/>

<https://atos.net/en/blog/why-the-marriage-of-big-tech-and-entertainment-is-built-to-las>

As my Mother was going through her electric brain shocks, my sister and I stayed with her first cousin and his wife. They were very sadistic and abusive to me. I was a young child trying to survive myself. When my Mother came out of the hospital she came to stay with us at her cousin's house. My older sister had been telling my Mother that we had to get out of there. My sister was afraid that I could not handle much more. My Mom did not realize the magnitude of their twisted abuse until they asked her to have a threesome with them. They explained that it is how my Mother could pay them for letting us live there. This is what some people call “survival or situational trafficking”. Shortly after that incident my Mother found a way to get us out of there. A hand started following me around for years. My grandmother finally helped me to stop seeing this “hand” and being afraid of it. Even though we only lived there for a short period of time, I developed a stutter where my words could not come out properly. I was afraid of people. I did not know how to use my voice. I tried to be good and invisible for a long time. I did not understand the “hand” and severe stutter was apart of my trauma and what had happened to me.

Fast forward to the fifth grade and by this time, we had moved so many times. This was our

fourth home and my fourth school. I got tired of being bullied. I got tired of being the new girl in school and being afraid. I prayed every night to God to make me be brave and not scared. I will never forget that morning. We lived in a trailer at this particular home and I used to beg my Mom every morning to not make me go to school. This particular morning I did not beg my Mother. I wanted to go to school and face the kids who were bullying me. God had finally answered my prayers. I was tired of being afraid. From that day on I found my voice and I was so happy. I wanted everyone to know what it was like to not be afraid and find their voice. I knew my life would never be the same.

By the time I was twenty four I was producing a documentary on family violence called “Not In My Back Yard”. It shows a personal and in depth look of women and children seeking refuge in a country that had refused to see it for what it really was. I was the first person who filmed in shelters where women and children were hiding. To this day I am honored that these people trusted me to help be their voice by documenting their journey. For seven years I filmed and documented what I found in shelters, safe havens, institutions, and organizations in America. They were either breaking the cycle of violence and abuse or perpetuating it. Sometimes sadly the system knows the least about the people they are serving. Which can cause more harm than good. We must understand the cultures, communities, traumas, and lived experiences that make people who they are. If we do not do this than we can not relate. If we can not relate then we can not truly help break any harmful cycle. Understanding, knowledge, consistency, and communication is critical when it comes to combatting human trafficking and sexual violence. The slave trade is a trade like no other. In my opinion human trafficking is the most intricate crime in our nation and the world. Even “victimology” is different with this crime. There are many different ways to buy and sell someone against their will in plain sight. It is not like robbing a bank. You go in the same way and out the same way. I have documented and studied over 56,000 hours of oppression, abuse, violence, and the effects of sex trafficking against women and children in our nation. On the journey of producing Not In My Back Yard, there were kids in each city at shelters that were being labeled child prostitutes. Most of them were in the foster care systems or were runaways. We all know a child can not be a prostitute. They can not consent even if they think they are. Their brain will not fully develop until they are twenty five. Many of them will not identify with being a victim. They will think they chose it even if they are being forced and or coerced. Children who are bought and sold are victims of child sex trafficking.

DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS: CPS, DFPS, FOSTER CARE, and SOCIAL SERVICE SYSTEM:

How and why it is happening at an alarming rate in our nation and the world.

[National Foster Youth Institute](#) recently estimated that 60 percent of child sex trafficking victims have been within foster care (or another part of the larger child welfare system.)

By 2004, I had seen more foster children on the East Coast being “labeled” as bad kids who were prostitutes. As stated above we know children can not be prostitutes. It amazed me that people could really think that and blame a child. What was more astonishing was that the focus was not on the perpetrators who were buying and selling them. The blame was shifted to the victims. I have heard judges, lawyers, law enforcement, prosecutors, teachers, school districts, churches, and society say the youth likes it. They like being passed around. They ask for it. They are bad kids. They are the throw away kids. Nobody wants them. No one is asking why a man would buy a fourteen year old for sex. Or why men go to strip clubs to watch young girls who are teenagers dance and spread their legs on a pole. Or why it is acceptable for the fifty year old women luring children and selling them at a brothel. It was then that I learned about human trafficking and or the sex slave trade twenty years ago. We set up systems in place in New Jersey so that it was not as easy to blame children and protect predators. It is too easy to cover up abuse and sex trafficking within the foster care system. It is too easy and too rampant. Accountability breeds responsibility and liability. Foster children basically do not have a first amendment right. They are property of the government. The Texas foster care system is riddled with sex crimes against foster children. So is our nation for that matter. They are so vulnerable. The majority of times these teens have been moved from place to place. They have no stability and it is almost impossible to get a proper education. The system mirrors traffickers patterns. A predator will show them consistency. It may be beatings, rapping's, and tricking, but it is a constant attention that they identify with as love. The foster care system in many states is perpetuating a cycle of abuse and cases of sexual violence and sex trafficking. Part of the issue is the structure of Child Protective Services. It is a business model to profit in many ways. There should be no privatized care making millions of dollars off of homeless and vulnerable children. Many CPS systems are set up in tiers. In Texas it is reported that more than 5,000 kids have therapeutic needs (moderate, specialized, intense levels) from Bukner. That means the placement agencies, residential facilities, group homes, and foster homes receive more funding for these children. There is no incentive to get a child off of medication or have them heal from their anxiety. The better a child does the less money everyone makes. Some privatized organizations are making a fortune while the kids are suffering. We learned about a shelter in Texas. It was touted as one of the best residential shelters for sex trafficking victims to come and heal. Many philanthropists in the state of Texas and the state itself gave this residential facility a lot of money. When their sex trafficking allegation came out, one of their perpetrators had been fired for inappropriate behavior with children from her last job. They had six children in the facility and received approximately a million dollars from the state. Even after juvenile detention centers and advocacy agencies had many complaints. The complaints went so far that when nothing was fixed the majority of the kids were removed. The shelter's funding for the one million dollars for six children did not include special grants, donations, and fundraisers. There was more funding this shelter had received. This

shelter was charging between three hundred to four hundred and fifty dollars a day. So the answer is not always more funding. In this case the state of Texas receives almost THREE BILLION dollars annually for approximately less than thirty thousand children. In this case oversight and systems need to be put into proper place. There needs to be checks and balances. Laws need to be put in place to protect our most vulnerable youth. They need to reallocate the funds with oversights and accountability. There needs to be oversight on how everyone is handling these children. Since there was not enough oversight children were trafficked, murdered, abused, and severely traumatized within the state of Texas and many other states.

Some pimps and traffickers are trafficking these children the same way they did twenty years ago. The system has not changed to these crimes and patterns. Which raises questions as to how this can be happening for over three decades and no one is saying anything.

Break The Cycle USA and NTZ with permission started keeping data on survivors in their fifties, forties, and thirties who were telling us the same stories of how they were lured and trafficked out of CPS shelters as domestic minor sex trafficking victims. A thirteen years old sex trafficking victim in 2022 will have almost the identical story as girl from 2002. We took our research a step farther and requested the missing runaway call logs from the foster care residential facilities. We started charting how many kids were going missing a week from these shelters. How many were recovered? How many came back on drugs, injured, and were exploited on the street? How many ended up in jail or juvenile detention? The intersectionality of all of these worlds connects and they connect quickly. There are shelters across the nation where the traffickers and predators walk right up to the door and convince the kids to come with them or have other children recruiting and grooming them from the inside out. Or the predator waits for youth to run away from the placement and offer them drugs, and or a place to stay. Or sadly the predator is a worker within the facilities and or is making money trafficking children. There are so many ways to commercially sexual exploit youth.

DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING IN SCHOOLS

Recently SB 1831 No Trafficking Zone law passed to protect children in every school throughout Texas. Making it a first degree felony for recruiting and sex trafficking of a child while at school or during a school related event. NTZ provides speciality advocacy to domestic minor sex trafficking victims and their families to help them navigate the system that handle them. Relating to the increase of penalties for those who engage in the crime of solicitation or trafficking on school premises.

While many cases of human trafficking go unreported or undetected, a groundbreaking two-year study showed that approximately 79,000 minor and youth victims of sex trafficking in resided Texas at any given time. The Texas School Safety Center, the Texas Education Agency, and numerous experts and professional advocates, have confirmed that school campuses are hotspots

for this crime. In fact, a 2018 survey of trafficking survivors found that 55% of the respondents were in school when they were groomed, recruited, or trafficked.

Case studies have also shown that traffickers use highly organized systems to recruit and schedule meetings during school hours and on school premises. These systems are supported by technological advances and social media platforms which increase access to students by those who would exploit them. This access has made it easier to buy and sell the most vulnerable among us, our children. Below are real victims of high school youth. It is happening at an alarming rate.

Three high school girls last month were being groomed by multiple traffickers in a wealthy community. The school, like many other schools, was scared and did not understand what was really happening. They were also more worried about liability and not accountability. The traffickers drugged the girls and took them to a strip club to dance and forcing them to perform sexual acts. The third teenager got beat up at school Monday morning for not going to the strip club. Her Mother called NTZ frantic. This is part of the breaking in. Another part of the breaking in process is rape and violence, when that does not work into submission many times the form is gang rape until the victim completely loses her spirit to fight back and is broken. There are other forms and methods of "breaking" a victim.

Here is the testimony of Mother Nichole Bowie. Her beautiful 15 year old daughter Madelynn Bennetsen trusted a girl she met in Junior High last year. She thought she was her school friend, who would later lure her on the path of skipping class, running away from home, drugs and trafficking. Maddie was murdered at 15 years old. Her Mom believes she fought back too hard. Maddy's Mom says, "If there were more awareness and training of the school staff and training for parents. Than Maddie's Mom and other parents may have been more alert to these behaviors as red flags instead of teenage behavior problems. She makes it her life's work to help others in honor of Maddy.

Many predators video this heinous crime called (CSAM) Child Sexual Abuse Material. This is a manipulation tactic. It will end up shaming and blackmailing child victims so they will do what they tell them too. They also share their rapes across social media and distributed them throughout the internet and schools. While the girls at school are labeled bad kids, amongst other degrading names. We have shifted the blame on our youth being preyed upon by systematic grooming and blaming. Treating them like they are criminals. Many of these girls will not graduate from school. They will be so traumatized and ridicule they will not go back to school. Some are sadly murdered, commit suicide, never leave the life, or go missing.

While others become addicted to drugs to try to cope with what happened to them. They are trying to deal with their trauma They are retaliated against when they speak to police which many times results in leaving them in danger with their trafficker for speaking out and allowing them to become targets. It happens all the time. They are targeted at all costs. Traffickers can buy and sell boys and girls 20-100 times a day. Making between 100k-300k a year per victim. That is not including some of the money they make over the internet on victims.

As student victims are afraid to return to school they will end up not graduating. They will be re-traumatized and re-victimized every time their rape and exploitation plays over and over in the school and on digital platforms. Big tech companies, credit card companies, social media platforms, and websites are making billions from viewing the heinous crime CSAM. Leaving the victims lost and angry to feel even more ashamed because our society and government are allowing this crime to happen all day and every day.

Our kids are being targeted everywhere. In malls, schools, events, social media. There are 7 billion people on the planet. Do we trust all these strangers to come into our homes and be everywhere our children are. Computers and cell phone allow anyone in your home and child's life. Our nation is in a crisis. This is a war against our children. Jeffrey Epstein paid \$300.00 for every girl brought to him. He picked poor girls in trailer parks in Florida to recruit for him. Most traffickers have a recruiting fee. So if your child is at school with a victim and is being pressured to recruit new girls. Then your child is at risk. We have set up this predator's playground. There are many systems that can be put in place to protect children and hold traffickers accountable. We need laws like the Earn It Act. We need laws like No trafficking Zones that protect youth in schools.

Congress needs to consult with organizations that are on the front lines doing the real work. Not talking heads. Organizations like No Trafficking Zone, National Center Of Sexual Exploitation, and Texas Counter Trafficking Initiative. These organizations day in and out see trafficking trends and know the gaps. Their workers are on the frontlines. Eleanor Kennelly Gaetan the Vice President of NCOSE every Friday facilitates a national meeting with survivor leaders, experts, and organizations. I have connected with some of the best people in the anti-trafficking movement through these strategy meetings. These organizations are also bi-partisan organizations that believe in collaboration.

The Business and Economics of Pimping and Trafficking

There are books written by pimps and traffickers on how to be the best pimp/trafficker. How to break a girl's spirit. How to recruit. How to strip someone of their identity. How to market your stable. How to incentivize your girls to make more money. You can order all these books online from Amazon. It is that simple to learn the sex slave trade.

Where do pimps/traffickers recruit- online, social media, transportation hubs, outside of youth shelters, malls, schools, college campuses, communities, neighborhoods, dating websites, social circles, night clubs, strip clubs, and bars. Social circles was one of the biggest for traffickers.

Most traffickers have business structure. Many pimps and traffickers have said, find your bottom and teach her everything. Then you can go out of town and relax. She trains the girls on quotas, recruitments, dates, etc. To run a successful sex business requires job training, recruiting, setting prices, social media content, running ads, marketing, arranging dates, providing transportation when necessary, providing bodyguards for the staff, collecting and organizing money. Let's not forget the importance of the relationship of the cops that are clients of the traffickers. While other pimps take a hands on approach and handle it all. Others have their family run their business.

Different Forms Of Trafficking:

Cult Trafficking

Familia Trafficking

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

International Trafficking

Truck Stop Trafficking

Border Trafficking

Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Trafficking Over The Internet

CSAM (Commercial Sexual Abuse Material)

Commercial Front Sex Trafficking (Illicit Cantinas, Bars, Strip Clubs, and Massage Parlors, Hotel, and Brothels)

Street Based (Walking the Track, blade, or street)

Domestic Sex Trafficking

Notes that I made that also needs to be know and understood

We need to reallocate funding and have oversight in the foster care and juvenile detention system. Way to many children are being exploited within and by these systems.

We need more funding for analyst, advocates, tech software and specialized law enforcement, and funds for survivor leaders/over-comers.

We need scenario training. Trauma can be very angry and violent.

We need culturally appropriate training for religions, cultures, and communities.

We need people to study trafficking trends, life patterns, organized crime, and the intersection of all of these predatory behaviors.

We need juvenile prosecutors to stop punishing female youth in detention as their trafficker gets off.

Juvenile justice, Probation, and Centers need advocacy, oversight, insight, and accountability. Court Appointed Attorneys that handle juvenile cases, all need to be trained on domestic minor sex trafficking laws. This includes the Judges, Prosecutors, Public Defenders and District Attorneys.

Knowledge on U and T visa's for international trafficking.

Advocates need to have as much of a voice as detectives.

Human trafficking is an intricate crime and advocates must be able to have the voice and authority to tell law enforcement when they have crossed the line. Or be able to hold them accountable.

We need to mandate that juveniles names can not be used in warrants or police reports.

We need to train law enforcement a lot more on what victim centered approach actually means.

We need laws such as the Earn It Act and No Trafficking School Zone Act to Pass.

Law enforcement needs to understand "victimology".

Thank you to the oversight committee and thank you for the opportunity. This hearing is critical to the safety of our society. You will learn everything about a society by the way it treats it's children. Please imagine if you were a victim or your child was. How would you want them to be treated.

The highest gratitude to the Chairwoman and honorable Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee.

NTZ President: Jacquelyn Aluotto

