

Testimony of Angela Guanzon
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Regional Perspectives in the Global Fight Against Human Trafficking
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My name is Angela Guanzon. I am from the Philippines. I came to the United States on a lawful visa with the promise of a good job. In the Philippines going to the United States is like winning the lottery. I was so excited to go I did not ask many questions. When I got my visa to go to the United States my passport was taken and I was told it would be held for me until I got to the United States. I travelled with about 10 other workers to the United States.

When I got to the US things were very different than I thought. I was told I owed \$12,000 for my transportation to the United States and the visa. I was told I would have to work for 10 years to pay this off. I was then forced to work at a retirement home for the elderly located in a suburb of Los Angeles. I worked 18 hour days and had to sleep on the floor in the hallway. I and my co-worker, Jayson were threatened that if we tried to escape, I would be deported by calling the police and telling them that we stole something from her. This went on for two years. My experience shows that human trafficking happens today in the United States and that it happens to both men and women.

Finally I was rescued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) after a neighbor noticed that I never had a day off. I spoke out about what happened to me to the FBI and eventually testified against my trafficker in criminal court. She got a 5 year prison sentence.

I am now a Certified Nurse's Assistant and a member of the CAST Survivor Advisory Caucus, a group of survivors in California who are learning leadership and advocacy skills in order to raise awareness and influence policies to better protect and help survivors of human trafficking. I am also a member of the National Survivor Network (NSN) which has over 85 survivor members from 18 states around the United States. Because of my work with the Caucus and the National Survivor Network I know the type of abuse that happened to me and my co-workers happens to other people as well. I know about workers who came to the US on an H-2B visa and was promised a good job like I was but instead had to work in a hotel under threats of the police. Other workers came to the US on an H-2A visa to work in agriculture but instead ended up enslaved on farms around the US with armed guards keeping watch.

I don't want what happened to me to happen to anyone else. No one should believe they have to work for an employer night and day for 10 years after getting a visa to come to the United States. Workers like me need information and protection so when we take an opportunity to come to the United States we have our freedom like everyone else does.

For this reason I would like to thank Chairman Royce for taking such an important step and introducing HR 3344. I feel like he has really listened to what I and other survivors have seen as a grave abuse that can be prevented. I hope to work in the future to help pass this piece of legislation and I am proud to stand here today to speak on behalf of other survivors to a world more free of abuse. Too often we only hear about sex trafficking both in

the United State and abroad and its very important to me that the Committee is paying attention to all forms of human trafficking.