



## Position Paper on Human Trafficking – 5/2013

The State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) of the Junior League, which represents approximately 3000 women in New Jersey, was founded on the premise of advocating for Women and Children. Since 2005, SPAC has worked to raise human trafficking awareness on an international level through Junior League conferences and NJ-based initiatives. SPAC has hosted or co-sponsored four NJ training events, including the first NJ-centric conference in 2009, “Human Trafficking in New Jersey: Hiding in Plain Sight.” In 2011 all Junior Leagues were honored through the United Nations Association of New York for ongoing efforts and commitment to eradicating human trafficking.

The federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) defines “severe forms of trafficking in persons” as follows:

- **Sex trafficking:** the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion. or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; and
- **Labor Trafficking:** the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

In the TVPA, the term “commercial sex act” means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.<sup>1</sup>

### Position Statement on Human Trafficking (HT)

SPAC opposes slavery in all its forms, and supports programs and legislation that stops slavery; assists Human Trafficking survivors in obtaining government assistance and services; and creates penalties and remedies for those who perpetuate slavery. SPAC supports programs that promote awareness and opposition to Human Trafficking for law enforcement, healthcare workers and the public on identifying trafficking victims and ensuring that survivors are not treated as criminals.

SPAC works a great deal with ECPAT-USA<sup>2</sup> to raise awareness about sexual exploitation of children and International sex tourism, a crime in which people travel abroad to exploit local children with the mistaken belief that it is culturally acceptable. Sex with children is a crime in every country; American travelers constitute a large part of this group exploiting children abroad.

In the U.S. at least 200,000 American children are at risk for sexual exploitation. Children are strategically targeted and manipulated by pimps who use hotel rooms as venues to abuse children. With the use of online classified ads, child trafficking is moving off the streets and behind closed doors.

### Junior Leagues of New Jersey State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC)

[www.jlnjspac.org](http://www.jlnjspac.org) or visit our [Facebook page](#)

Founded in 1901 by Mary Harriman, the Junior Leagues are charitable nonprofit organizations of women, developed as civic leaders, creating demonstrable community impact.

The Tourism Child-Protection Code of Conduct (the Code) was created in 1998 by **ECPAT** (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) Sweden to address the issue of child sex tourism. Code signatories commit to train their staff and alert authorities to cases of sex tourism. Initially supported by the government of Sweden and UNICEF, it is currently funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs and supported by the United Nations World Tourism Organization. SPAC members distribute ECPAT-USA informational postcards (My Voice, My Choice) to hotels, airlines, and other tourism companies and work to increase US-based company signatories.

**The NJ Statewide HT Task Force** was created by the NJ Office of the Attorney General and SPAC volunteers have been members for several years. The Task Force combats HT through education, collaboration and prosecution by training and assisting law enforcement in identifying victims, coordinating statewide efforts in the identification and provision of services to victims of human trafficking, and increasing the successful prosecution of trafficking of human persons.<sup>3</sup>

SPAC is a vital member of the **NJ Coalition Against Human Trafficking**, a diverse group of faith-based organizations, non-profits, government agencies, law enforcement, and direct service providers. SPAC is at the forefront of several initiatives, including:

- Encouraging mayors/councils to proclaim 1/11 as HT Awareness Day in their towns.
- Planning and serving as emcee of the State House HT Awareness Day (1/11/13).
- Advocated for HT bills declaring 1/11 as Human Trafficking Awareness Day, declaring January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month, and A3352/S2239 - the Human Trafficking Prevention, Protection, and Treatment Act (a bill SPAC helped draft via the NJ Human Trafficking Task Force and legislative meetings). **All bills were signed into law by Governor Chris Christie on 5/6/2013.**
- Coordinating initiatives leading up to the 2014 Super Bowl.<sup>4</sup>

**Polaris Project** is a leading organization in the global fight against modern-day slavery that provides training, legislative advocacy, and survivor services. SPAC partners with Polaris Project in promoting awareness for law enforcement, healthcare workers and the public in identifying trafficking victims and ensuring survivors are not treated as criminals. SPAC encourages widespread use of the national HT National Hotline, which is funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services, (888-3737-888 or text tips to "BeFree" or 233733) and the Polaris Project website.<sup>5</sup>

### **Going Forward**

SPAC members are civic leaders in combatting human trafficking. Delegates will continue to advocate for programs and legislation designed to positively impact HT survivors while holding perpetrators more accountable. SPAC volunteers will play a key role in the NJ HT Task Force and the NJ Coalition Against HT. Most importantly, SPAC will give voice to some of our society's most vulnerable.

1. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement. *Fact sheet: human trafficking*. Retrieved April 3, 2013 from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/resource/fact-sheet-human-trafficking>
2. ECPAT USA (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking). <http://ecpatusa.org>
3. New Jersey Human Trafficking Task Force. <http://www.nj.gov/oag/dcj/humantrafficking> or <http://www.njhumantrafficking.gov>
4. New Jersey Coalition Against Human Trafficking. <http://www.njhumantrafficking.org>
5. Polaris Project. 24-hour Hotline 888-3737-888 or text tips to "BeFree" or 233733 <http://www.polarisproject.org>