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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 18, 2023

AG Kaul Announces Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force

MADISON, Wis. – During National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, Attorney General Josh Kaul is pleased to announce a new statewide multidisciplinary task force comprised of federal, state, and tribal law enforcement and victim service providers dedicated to supporting survivors of human trafficking and ensuring justice is served by those who commit the crime. The Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (WAHTTF) is led by the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) and Project Respect.

“This task force will enhance efforts in Wisconsin to combat human trafficking and provide support for survivors,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul. “By bringing law enforcement and victim service providers together, we can help ensure that Wisconsin is taking a comprehensive approach to fighting this crime.”

“A coordinated strategy is needed to actively engage with the community to develop trust, build relationships, support survivor identification, and incorporate feedback from survivors to improve Wisconsin’s response to this crime,” said Project Respect Executive Director Jan Miyasaki.

Building on the foundation established by the previous Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force from 2015-2017 co-led by the Office of the Attorney General and the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, WAHTTF upholds the intent of the [Trafficking Victims Protection Act](#) by ensuring that all trafficking victims are identified and receive access to a comprehensive array of support services, and that crimes of human trafficking are successfully investigated and prosecuted at the local, state, tribal and federal levels. WAHTTF emphasizes the importance of strong working relationships between law enforcement and victim services in its

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mission to develop and implement a coordinated and collaborative, victim-centered, trauma-informed multidisciplinary response to human trafficking in Wisconsin.

WAHTTF is in the critical first steps of formalizing its structure, operational protocols, and relationships with key stakeholders for its multidisciplinary statewide team and, in 2023, plans to begin expanding its membership to include law enforcement, victim service providers, government agencies, tribal entities, and community-based organizations. WAHTTF looks forward to engaging with communities to identify potential areas where sex and labor trafficking may be occurring, including survivor and lived experience experts in its leadership, and delivering training for partners throughout the state. WAHTTF also plans to collect and share data on human trafficking in Wisconsin, to provide a clearer understanding of the crime in our state.

Collaboration between law enforcement, victim service providers, and other stakeholders is crucial to the successful proactive investigation and prosecution of human trafficking cases at the federal and local levels. The task force has a coordinated strategy to actively engage with the community to develop trust, build relationships, and support proactive case identification.

In addition to DOJ and Project Respect, membership on WAHTTF's Steering Committee includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Oneida Tribal Police Department, the Department of State Diplomatic Security Service (DSS), Family Support Center (FSC) based in Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties, and United Migrant Opportunity Service (UMOS) based in Milwaukee and Oshkosh.

WAHTTF is funded by a multi-year grant from the United States Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime. This multi-year federal grant funds key positions for the operation of the task force including a Task Force Coordinator, Program & Policy Analyst, and Human Trafficking Special Agent based at DCI; Victim Services Program Manager based at Project Respect; and two full-time Human Trafficking Victim Advocates based at FSC and UMOS.