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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2023

AG Kaul Announces Additional \$2 Million Grant Award for Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul is pleased to announce the effort of the Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (WAHTTF) will continue for another three years with a newly awarded \$2 million grant from the United States Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime. WAHTTF is a 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 that those who commit this crime face justice. WAHTTF is led by the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) and Project Respect. The task force was started in 2020 and is supported by grant funding.

“Building effective partnerships between law enforcement and victim service providers strengthens our ability to fight human trafficking,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul. “We look forward to continuing the important work of this task force for an additional three years.”

“WAHTTF is excited to be able to fund additional victim service providers to facilitate victim services to survivors of trafficking and victim service coordination using a regional model throughout the state of Wisconsin,” said Jan Miyasaki, Director of Project Respect. “The increased capacity for the coordination of victim services will continue to progress WAHTTF’s mission of developing and implementing a coordinated and collaborative, victim-centered, trauma-informed multidisciplinary response to human trafficking in the state of Wisconsin.”

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WAHTTF is in the final stages of formalizing its structure, operational protocols, and relationships with key stakeholders for its multidisciplinary statewide team. In 2024, WAHTTF plans to begin expanding its membership to include law enforcement, victim service providers, government agencies, tribal entities, and community-based organizations. Moving forward WAHTTF will continue to engage with communities to identify potential areas where sex trafficking and labor trafficking may be occurring and delivering training for partners throughout the state. WAHTTF also intends to engage with the other human trafficking task forces throughout the state to enhance the state's response to human trafficking.

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 with a victim centered approach.

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. This grant provides funding for new victim service provider partners including Family Advocates, Inc. in Platteville, Convergence Resource Center in Milwaukee, and Wisconsin's tribal coalition, American Indians Against Abuse, Inc. located in Hayward, Wis.