**Understanding Recent Legislation Surrounding the Issue of Human Trafficking**

**The passage of HB 2501 last spring was a big step in the right direction for Kansas**. It changed the way commercial sexual exploitation is investigated in Kansas, and how convicted buyers of sexual services are punished. As well as expressing approval for HB 2501, you may want to call attention to the need for continuing action and further funding. A sample:

* + “We would like to express our gratitude for your role in passing HB 2501. The issues of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation are incredibly important to us. Although 2501 was a step in the right direction, we feel that the long-term effects of exploitation require further legislative attention. There is a need for greater evidence-based funding for after-care and rehabilitative programs.”
  + This should be targeted toward local state representatives, as well as members of the [House Standing Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice](http://www.kslegislature.org/li_2012/b2011_12/committees/ctte_h_corr_juv_jus_1/), who reviewed the bill (HB2501) before it was passed.

Due to the nature of the current funding structure for the **state’s fund for survivor assistance programs**, the Kansas Attorney General has considerable influence over the allocation of funds for assistance. As well as expressing appreciation for his past efforts (*especially the formation of the*[*Human Trafficking Advisory Board*](http://ag.ks.gov/about-the-office/advisory-groups/human-trafficking-advisory-board)), you may also wish to encourage greater evidence-based oversight in the allocation of funds from the Human Trafficking Victim Assistance to survivor care services. For example:

* + “We wish to express our gratitude for your role in enlisting members of our communities in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation by establishing the Human Trafficking Advisory Board.”
  + “We would like to express our desire to see greater levels of evidence-based oversight implemented in the process to determine the allocation of funds from the Human Trafficking Assistance Fund.”
  + This should be targeted toward [Attorney General Derek Schmidt](http://ag.ks.gov/about-the-office/contact-us) and/or the [Anti-Human Trafficking Unit](http://ag.ks.gov/childrens-safety/human-trafficking) of the State Attorney General's Office.

**H.R. 3530 "The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act" is a bill which has passed in the house, and has been passed on to Congress**. It has elements similar to those in the Kansas bill. However, at the national level, you may want to place special emphasis on the need for an evidence-based approach to the way assistance is handled within the bill. You may want to write something like:

* + “We would like to express our desire to see H.R. 3530, “The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act," be raised in the Senate. Although the core of the bill is a step in the right direction, the damage caused by human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation leave lasting scars. Therefore, we would ask that additional attention be paid to the accountable provision of service, training and intervention funding for victims, in order to achieve the greatest impact and determine adequate levels of funding.”
  + This is specifically targeted at [Sen. Pat Roberts](http://www.roberts.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=EmailPat) and [Sen. Jerry Moran](http://www.moran.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-jerry), as the sitting Senators of Kansas. It probably wouldn't be a terrible idea to cover all bases by also writing to [Greg Orman](http://www.ormanforsenate.com/contact_us), who is currently campaigning for Roberts' seat.

You may also want to express appreciation for the service of those on the Attorney General's [Human Trafficking Advisory Board](http://ag.ks.gov/about-the-office/advisory-groups/human-trafficking-advisory-board). These individuals range from police officials to attorneys to direct care providers for survivors of trafficking. Karen Countryman-Roswurm is a member, for instance.

* + A simple “Thank you for your continuing service on the Human Trafficking Advisory Board,” personalized to the recipient would be a great recognition for this person’s contributions to society.
  + This could be targeted at any of the [members of the Advisory Council](http://ag.ks.gov/about-the-office/advisory-groups/human-trafficking-advisory-board), or to the council as a whole.