

AMWA-PATH (Physicians Against the Trafficking of Humans) wants to commend the 117th Congress for passing the **Counter Human Trafficking Act of 2021** which among other things establishes a **Department of Homeland Security Center for Countering Human Trafficking**. This center will serve to unify global efforts to counter human trafficking through law enforcement operations and victim protection, prevention and awareness programs. The focus on an evidence-based, survivor-centered approach in training, identification and screening efforts is so critical to anti-trafficking efforts. The law which was signed on December 27, 2022 also requires that **criminal justice efforts** must **increase the focus on labor trafficking situations** and that corporations are expected to eradicate forced labor from their supply chains. In addition, the Center will have a **Protection and Awareness Programs Unit** which will operate the **national Blue Campaign** to raise public awareness on trafficking. Congress appropriated funding of **\$14,000,000** to carry out the various goals of this Act. Creating a dedicated, focused federal office with an appointed director and staff focused on increased intervention is a good first step in the recognition of human trafficking as a serious human rights violation.

We also want to recognize the Justice Department for providing over **\$90 million in grant funds**, with over **500 awards** given to **organizations that provide services to survivors, support research and evaluate responses to human trafficking**. \$32.6 million was awarded to programs that provide services to survivors. \$21.6 million was awarded to develop, expand or strengthen **multidisciplinary anti-trafficking task forces**. \$16.4 million was awarded to provide **housing assistance funds**, as housing insecurity is a big risk factor for initial exploitation and inability to extricate from harmful trafficking situations for many survivors. \$3.1 million was awarded to assist the **Office for Victims of Crime** to provide training and technical assistance and develop tools and resources for anti-trafficking stakeholders, including collaboration with the **Office on Trafficking in Persons** at the Department of Health and Human Services to develop **anti-trafficking standards** of care for service providers.

We urge **additional federal focus** and **efforts on providing funding, resources and training for all health care workers** through the Office on Trafficking in Persons in the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. **Health care professionals** are in a unique position to interact with potential victims prior to and during their exploitation and can better recognize and **intervene early** when trained on **risk factors and indicators for human trafficking**. Health care professionals, working through a **preventative public health lens**, can become a real force in anti-trafficking efforts by identifying **vulnerability factors** (for example, housing & food instability, history of family or intimate partner violence, substance use disorders) in our patients before exploitation and providing access to **stabilizing interventions** to those most at risk. The physician and student leaders at AMWA-PATH have developed a comprehensive training **“Learn to Identify and Fight Trafficking” (LIFT)** directed to health care professionals. **LIFT** is a free 3 hour CME- accredited training taught by our volunteer physician leaders and survivors, that focuses on the identification and treatment of survivors of human trafficking in a trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, patient-centered manner.

If you would like to **learn more**, join our leadership team of volunteer medical students and physicians, arrange a training or donate to help fund our anti-trafficking efforts in education, advocacy, education and research, **please visit www.amwa-doc.org/our-work/initiatives/human-trafficking**.

Thanks!

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