



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
OFFICE ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States Summary of Meeting May 5, 2021

Wednesday, May 5, 2021 | 2–6 p.m. (Eastern)

The National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States (the Committee) convened virtually for its eighth meeting on May 5, 2021. The National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center (NHTTAC) provided technical support to Committee members and public participants through Zoom. Committee Chair Glen (J.R.) Ujifusa, Senior Deputy District Attorney of Multnomah County, Oregon, opened the meeting, held a roll call, and established quorum.

Committee Members

Present Virtually

Rebecca Bender, Rebecca Bender Initiative
Justice Bobbe Bridge (Ret.), Center for Children & Youth Justice
Marissa Castellanos, Catholic Charities of Louisville
Kimberly Chang, M.D., M.P.H., Asian Health Services
Captain Pi Downsbrough (Ret.), Massachusetts State Police
Governor Doug Ducey (Substitute: Maria Fuentes), Arizona
Jordan Greenbaum, M.D., International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children
Stacey Katz, Psy.D., WestCoast Children's Clinic
Robert Lung, 18th Judicial District, Arapahoe County and Douglas County Justice Centers, Colorado
Christine Raino, Esq., Shared Hope International
Judge John J. Romero, Jr. (Ret.), Second Judicial District Court, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Children's Court Division
Kathy Sauve, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota — Brainerd
Staca Shehan, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
Glen (J.R.) Ujifusa, Jr., Senior Deputy District Attorney of Multnomah County, Oregon (Committee Chair)
Yasmin Vafa, Rights4Girls
Erin Williamson, L.C.S.W., M.P.A., Love146

Not Present

Joel Filmore, Ph.D.

Camille Naaktgeboren, Ph.D., University of Nevada, Las Vegas

John Vanek, San Jose Police Department (Ret.)

Other Attendees

The list below is based on registration. Other participants may have participated virtually but did not register and are not listed below.

Federal Participants

Katherine Chon, Director, Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Committee Designated Federal Officer (DFO)

Lauren Devine, OTIP

Debra Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for External Affairs, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Vera Kiefer, OTIP

Public Participants

Angella Alvernaz, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

Margaret Blankemeyer, NHTTAC

Ashley Garrett, NHTTAC

Bethany Gilot, BGilot Consulting

Jessica Heldman, University of San Diego School of Law

Sarah Ladd, Minnesota Department of Human Services

Erin Laskowski, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

Alexandra Menezes, Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia

Elizabeth Mitaro, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)

Caroline Palmer, Minnesota Department of Health

Jennifer Ray, Covenant House

Thuba Roush, USCRI

Anna Sukmann, Mississippi Attorney General's Office

Opening Remarks

Committee Chair J.R. Ujifusa welcomed everyone to the eighth meeting.

Committee Business

Mr. Ujifusa reviewed the agenda for the meeting. The first item on the agenda was the public comment period with a facilitated discussion, followed by the Committee working session in which members discussed the self-assessment survey and its progress; extensions and timing for state responses; points of contact for states; upcoming meetings; requests for extension from states; questions from consultation

calls; potential extensions for the Committee; and the structure of upcoming reports and how to assign responsibilities for the final executive summary.

Public Comments

Ashley Garrett with NHTTAC read the public comments submitted before the meeting into the public record. The public comments can be viewed [online](#).

Before the public meeting was concluded, there was one additional public comment read into the public record from the Zoom chat. Caroline Palmer with the Minnesota Department of Health agreed with the comments that were previously read into the record about unaccompanied children and stated that more attention needs to be paid on harm reduction.

Committee Discussion of Public Comments

Committee DFO Katherine Chon responded to the question of what will happen with the federal recommendations made by the Committee. Ms. Chon clarified that OTIP forwarded the full report when it was released to federal partners. Amid the pandemic, changing priorities, a new administration, and incoming political leadership, OTIP plans to resurface the recommendations specifically for federal partners. Ms. Chon offered Committee members the opportunity to join briefing meetings with ACF programs to provide expertise and perspectives on federal recommendations. Ms. Chon stated that OTIP is anticipating three to four meetings on topic areas with agencies within HHS such as the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the Children's Bureau, the Family and Youth Services Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, and potentially, the U.S. Department of Justice and other federal agencies..

Ms. Chon stated that OTIP will coordinate with the subcommittee chairs to determine which members will attend the meetings, dependent on the subject area. Because the original response deadline for states was June 23, 2021, Ms. Chon will aim to have the meetings scheduled before that time.

Committee Working Session

Ms. Chon introduced and welcomed the newest member of the Committee, Maria Fuentes Director of the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family from Arizona's Governor Ducey's office. Ms. Chon thanked Governor Ducey's previous substitute, Gil Orrantia, for his service on the Committee prior to his recent retirement.

Progress of State Self-Assessment Survey

Ms. Chon provided a brief update that there are no complete submitted responses for the State Self-Assessment Survey, and a few states have started the survey on Max.gov: North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and Utah. Ms. Chon reminded the Committee that while the original deadline for states was June 23, 2021, the Committee received a few extension requests. Most states requesting an extension indicated that their fiscal year ends around June 23, 2021. Some states requested extensions through December 2021.

Ms. Fuentes spoke to the priorities of the governors' offices and explained that due to the state cycle, between September and October is an ideal for states to respond to the survey. At the close of the discussion, the Committee approved an extension for all states to complete the survey to August 31, 2021 while reiterating that the Committee's work is tied to a statutory timetable. Should the Committee receive an extension, the deadline for state responses to the self-assessment survey will be extended to the end of December 2021.

State Self- Assessment Survey Response Updates

Lauren Devine with OTIP stated that 15 states (Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, South Dakota, Washington, and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia remain for Committee members to identify contacts for outreach in the state. Ms. Devine said that the National Compendium meeting occurred on May 4, 2021, and six more states came forward with points of contact. Ms. Devine clarified that if states experience challenges accessing the document through Google, she is available for assistance. Different members volunteered to lead outreach to the remaining 15 states and the District of Columbia.

Some Committee members cited challenges in conducting outreach and receiving responses due to the pandemic and because it was the end of the state fiscal year. Ms. Fuentes asked what the outreach process has been thus far. Ms. Chon and Ms. Devine clarified that there is a specific process for sending communications from federal government offices to governors' offices, facilitated through the National Governor's Association (NGA). Ms. Chon stated that the Committee has relied on Governor Ducey's office for insight about NGA membership and coordination with peers. Mr. Ujifusa cited presentations on the NAC's work that were created by members for other national entities, such as the NGA and the National Association of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Ms. Chon introduced Debra Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for External Affairs, and inquired about her ideas on how to strengthen communications between ACF and state agencies, including governors' offices. Ms. Johnson thanked the Committee and opened the floor for questions. Mr. Ujifusa clarified that the Committee wants to know how and to whom to reach out to in order to circulate the self-assessment survey most effectively. Ms. Johnson clarified that there is an official process, like Ms. Chon mentioned, but that the Committee can develop a letter that would be sent through the Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs. In that letter, the Committee can ask who the point of contact is for the state. Alternatively, the letter can be sent through the Office of Regional Operations, who can connect them with state commissioners.

Upcoming Meetings

The Committee agreed that one meeting will be held September 8-9, 2021, and the Committee will determine if it is comfortable meeting in person or virtually. The next meeting will be held in the first two weeks of December 2021; dates to be determined.

Extension of Committee Work

Ms. Chon explained that OTIP has examined two avenues for extension of the Committee. The first is the official statutory extension that can only be designated by Congress. The second is for an administrative extension that could be designated by HHS. At this time, the Committee will sunset in 2022 according to the statutory timeline outlined in the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 (although the Committee's charter expires in January 2023). The Committee agreed that it wants to move forward with the possibility of an administrative extension to complete its work.

Mr. Ujifusa previously penned the letter requesting an extension to Congress but agreed to update that letter to include the impact of the pandemic on the work of the Committee, state priorities, and delays in releasing the survey, ultimately requesting an extension through September 2023.

Ms. Chon clarified that a budget to support the work for the Committee will be determined by OTIP during its annual budget process.

Structure of the Upcoming Executive Summary

The Committee agreed that a small group of members should determine what the format of the executive summary will be, which will be based on the current structure of the survey. The basic structure was discussed and agreed upon. The executive summary will include an introduction to the Committee with information on the development and dissemination of the survey. It will then be organized by the 12 subsections to include summaries of state responses. These summaries will include visual representations of quantitative data (pie charts, etc.) as well as qualitative summaries (potentially including callout boxes for particularly compelling data).

Members agreed that the Committee wants to use this report to elevate what states are saying and to highlight their successes. The Committee added that although the report will summarize findings, the appendices of the report will include the complete self-assessment surveys from states.

The Committee requested assistance in the qualitative analysis of the data for the executive summary. OTIP determined that support in the analysis of the data will be discussed by the government office to determine the best next steps.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m. (Eastern).