

# **National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States**

## **Summary of Meeting**

### **September 17, 2020**

#### **Thursday, September 17, 2020 | 2–6 p.m.**

The National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States (the Committee) convened virtually for its sixth meeting on September 17, 2020. The National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center (NHTTAC) provided technical support to Committee members and public participants through Adobe Connect. 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**

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  
Governor Doug Ducey (Substitute: Gil Orrantia), 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., Second Judicial District Court, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Children's Court Division  
Kathy Sauve, Lutheran Social Services 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  
John Vanek, San Jose Police Department (Ret.)  
Erin Williamson, L.C.S.W., M.P.A., Love146

##### **Not Present**

Rebecca Bender, Rebecca Bender Initiative  
Captain Pi Downsborough, Massachusetts State Police  
Joel Filmore, Ph.D.  
Camille Naaktgeboren, Ph.D., University of Nevada, Las Vegas

## **Other Attendees**

The list below is based on registration. Other participants may have virtually participated 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, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Committee Designated Federal Officer (DFO)

Kimberly Casey, OTIP

Lauren Devine, OTIP

Ashli-Jade Douglas, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

Sherri Harris, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)

Vera Kiefer, OTIP

Troy MacMullan, U.S. House of Representatives

Elizabeth Pfenning, OTIP

### **Public Participants**

Margaret Blankemeyer, NHTTAC

Bryanna Carroll, NHTTAC

Ashley Garrett, NHTTAC

Megan Lape, California Department of Social Services

Jennifer Ray, Florida Department of Health

Stephanie Vega, NHTTAC

## **Opening Remarks**

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

## **Committee Business**

Committee Chair J.R. Ujifusa reviewed the agenda for the meeting. The Committee's interim report on Best Practices and Recommendations to States was published on September 15, 2020. The Committee's interim report contains 12 sections (Multidisciplinary Response, Screening and Identification, Child Welfare, Service Provision, Housing, Law Enforcement and Prosecution, Judiciary, Demand Reduction, Prevention, Legislation and Regulation, Research and Data, and Funding and Sustainability) with 127 recommendations for states to address the sex trafficking of children and youth in the United States.

Mr. Ujifusa reviewed the tiering process for states and cited resources and examples that states may consult as they work to improve their response to the sex trafficking of children and youth in their jurisdictions. Mr. Ujifusa noted that some sections of the interim report include recommendations for how the federal government can support states in their efforts to combat the sex trafficking of children and youth; these recommendations will be provided to the appropriate federal entities that will respond to the Committee's recommendations. Finally, Mr. Ujifusa shared video files created by Committee members that provide information on the interim report; these videos are available on the Committee's website.

## **Old Business**

*State Self-Assessment Survey and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)*

Committee DFO Katherine Chon reviewed the process of finalizing the interim report and discussed moving forward with the state self-assessment survey. Ms. Chon stated that after states review the Committee's report, the Committee will ask each state to collaborate with task forces, law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, child welfare and other agencies, organizations, and relevant groups to complete a self-assessment of implementation efforts based on the Committee's recommendations. Ms. Chon clarified that this is an opportunity to showcase the innovative and successful work of each state.

For each recommendation in the report, states should assess the extent to which their state has worked to address the sex trafficking of children and youth by choosing the recommendation tier that best reflects its work (Tier I or Tier II, as appropriate). The state self-assessment survey to assess their progress is undergoing OMB review, and a 30-day notice will appear in the Federal Register in the coming weeks. After states submit their self-assessment surveys to the Committee over the next couple of months, the Committee will publish a final report describing the efforts of each state to implement their recommendations.

Ms. Chon invited Vera Kiefer of OTIP to provide an update on the state self-assessment survey. Ms. Kiefer explained that the final clearance to OMB is being prepared and OTIP believes the state self-assessment survey should be available at the end of October. The state self-assessment survey mirrors the interim report and will be hosted on MAX.gov. The state self-assessment survey will be open as long as needed, but a 30-day response will be encouraged for states to submit their responses to the report. Ms. Kiefer acknowledged that more time may be necessary due to COVID-19 and that extensions for states will be determined by members of the Committee during the working session.

## **Public Comments**

Members of the public were invited to submit comments via email before the meeting and during the meeting via the Adobe Connect chat box. Ashley Garrett, Director of NHTTAC, read into record the public comment submitted via email from Casey Family Programs:

*“Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States (NAC). Casey Family Programs is the nation's largest operating foundation that focuses on safely reducing the need for foster care and building communities of hope for children and families across America. We provide ongoing strategic consultation, technical assistance, data analysis, and independent research, and we work in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories and with more than a dozen tribal nations to assist child welfare leaders in their efforts. Casey Family Programs also works directly with children and families<[https://caseyfamilypro-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/media/2034\\_CS-Direct-ServicesBrochure\\_fnl.pdf](https://caseyfamilypro-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/media/2034_CS-Direct-ServicesBrochure_fnl.pdf)> in our nine field offices to develop and demonstrate effective, practical solutions to safely reduce the need for foster care, improve well-being, and secure safe and lifelong families for every single child in our care.*

*Based on what we have learned in our work with children, youth, families, and communities across the country, we offer the following comments and considerations to the NAC:*

*We know that child welfare involvement is a response to trafficking in some cases and placement in foster care can make a youth vulnerable to trafficking. However, we have very little and inconsistent national data to understand the problem, making it difficult to develop appropriate prevention activities and provide appropriate trauma-informed services. In an effort to get more comprehensive and accurate data and to inform a response, frontline staff, law enforcement, and judicial personnel need training and*

*assessment tools to identify victims and gather accurate information. Assessment tools should continuously assess risk of trafficking and service needs among children and youth in the foster care system.*

*The following are gaps in national data that we believe warrant further consideration and conversation at the state and national level to inform this work:*

*Child welfare involvement of children and youth who have experienced trafficking, including:*

- *Placement type, length of stay, and type of permanency exit for victims or those who are at risk of trafficking*
- *Specialized services for victims and their caregivers—this would be helpful to inform a more family-centered response. Specifically, what types of evidence-based, trauma-informed services are offered, providers (i.e., therapists), and the service duration would be helpful. In addition, such services should be culturally responsive and provided in an equitable manner.*
- *Previous child welfare involvement and dual status/juvenile justice involvement*

*We also suggest being sure jurisdictions disaggregate data by race, age, and gender.*

*For more information, please see Casey Family Program's Questions from the Field issue brief, entitled How Can Child Protection Agencies Identify and Support Youth Involved In or At Risk of Commercial Child Sexual Exploitation? <<https://caseyfamilypro-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/media/20.07-QFF-SC-Sextrafficking.pdf>>*

*Engaging youth and families with lived experience in all stages of policy, program, training, and development is critical to developing prevention efforts and development of a trauma-informed response. We strongly encourage jurisdictions to frequently consult and engage with constituents to inform policy, programs, data collection and analysis, and staff development/training. For example, the National Foster Youth and Alumni Policy Council has priorities related to reducing vulnerabilities and responding to trafficking and trauma that could inform the NAC, including their priorities on building social capital and quality residential services. Their key priorities related to the work of the NAC are at the links below for your consideration:*

*Quality Residential Services, see especially #6*

*[http://nationalpolicycouncil.org/sites/default/files/docs/blogs/Quality%20Residential%20Services\\_Feb.%202020\\_Final%20.pdf](http://nationalpolicycouncil.org/sites/default/files/docs/blogs/Quality%20Residential%20Services_Feb.%202020_Final%20.pdf)*

*Social Capital Priority*

*<http://nationalpolicycouncil.org/sites/default/files/docs/landingpage/Improving%20Social%20Capital%20for%20Youth%20in%20Foster%20Care%20%281%29.pdf>*

*Implementing Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, P.L. 113-153*

*[http://nationalpolicycouncil.org/sites/default/files/docs/landingpage/Public%20Law%20113\\_183%20Priorities.pdf](http://nationalpolicycouncil.org/sites/default/files/docs/landingpage/Public%20Law%20113_183%20Priorities.pdf)*

*Reducing Vulnerability of Foster Youth to Predators and Sex Trafficking*

*<http://nationalpolicycouncil.org/sites/default/files/docs/landingpage/Vulnerability%20Priorities.pdf>*

*Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. We would be happy to discuss this area of work further.”*

No further public comments were submitted.

## **Committee Working Session**

### *Overview of Timeline*

Ms. Chon congratulated the Committee on submitting the interim report on September 15, 2020. Ms. Chon clarified that between today’s meeting and September 22, 2020, OTIP aims to submit the final 30-day clearance to OMB, which will then be opened for public comments through the Federal Registry. After 30 days, OMB will approve the state self-assessment survey and OTIP will post it to initiate data collection on or around October 20, 2020. Between November and January 2021, the Committee will develop a report on state responses to the self-assessment survey and their implementation of the Committee’s recommendations. Ms. Chon confirmed the next Committee meeting will take place virtually on December 9–10, 2020; at this time, the Committee should have sufficient data from states to begin developing an executive summary.

### *Supporting States to Complete the Survey*

The Committee acknowledged that the timeline for states to respond is short and the request is substantial. The Committee agreed that the timeline should be kept short (30-day response period for states) with the opportunity for states to request an extension. The Committee intends to allow states to provide their self-assessment updates through late Summer 2021 so as not to penalize states that respond early.

Ms. Chon reminded the Committee that there will be one designated point of contact determined by the state governor’s office, and that the governor’s office will need to have a state-specific strategy to implement the recommendations. Ms. Chon also recognized that there may be challenges specific to certain states, such as coordination across multiple sectors. Ms. Chon reminded the Committee that the burden of data collection is on the Committee, not on the states; participation in the state self-assessment survey is voluntary.

The Committee concurred that the following actions should be taken to support states in completing the self-assessment survey:

1. A single point of contact for each state, designated by the state governor’s office, will be responsible for collecting information; they will receive a link to the self-assessment survey specific to their state, which they may distribute to relevant stakeholders at their discretion. The point of contact will also be responsible for certifying when the state self-assessment survey has been completed. Pending permissions, the point of contact’s information will be shared publicly on the Committee’s website in order to promote intrastate coordination of stakeholders.
2. An updated list of state submissions will be posted on the Committee’s website so that stakeholders within each state can track each state’s completion of the self-assessment survey.
3. States will be able to provide updates after their initial submission to encourage an initial submission within 30 days, and an opportunity to update further implementation prior to September 2021.

### *Engaging Stakeholders Across Various Sectors to Disseminate and Review the Report*

The Committee reviewed national stakeholders identified at the previous meeting and agreed to brainstorm additional stakeholders specific to sections of the report during subcommittee working sessions. Stakeholders identified by the Committee at the previous meeting included: National Governors Association (NGA), U.S. Congress, U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Child Welfare/ACF Regions,

National Association of Attorneys General, National Association of Public Welfare Administrators, National Indian Child Welfare Association, tribal entities, state and local human trafficking task forces, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Ms. Chon reminded the Committee that the statutory requirement references states, but the Committee confirmed that it prefers to extend the invitation to complete the survey to tribal entities and territories (U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa).

Ms. Chon confirmed that notifications of the state self-assessment survey have been sent to members of Congress who co-sponsored the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 and to the NGA. Ms. Chon clarified that it was left to the NGA to communicate the provided information to every governor.

The Committee agreed that they wish to share notification of the state self-assessment survey with as many entities as possible and agreed to focus on sector-specific stakeholders during the subcommittee sessions.

#### *Communications Strategy*

Ms. Chon introduced Kimberly Casey of OTIP to share the communications strategy. Ms. Casey explained that an initial outreach package has been prepared for the members of the Committee. Ms. Casey confirmed that the interim report is published on the Committee's website, along with seven videos meant to raise awareness about certain elements in the report. Included in the communications strategy are talking points about the Committee, a summary of the intent of the interim report highlighting the public health response focus, and information on the next steps for states. ACF's Office of Legislative Affairs and Budget (OLAB) will notify Congress of the report, specifically the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee. ACF External Affairs will notify the NGA.

The Committee requested that OTIP add the following items to the outreach package: a sample outreach email and a summary letter on Committee letterhead to send to stakeholders, presentation materials that summarize the interim report and provide instructions on how to complete the self-assessment, and standardized language for social media platforms to be leveraged by individual members and their organizations.

#### *Potential Technical Assistance Needs*

The Committee confirmed that they anticipate state-specific questions on the intent of specific recommendations and agreed to publish all questions and answers on the Committee website. The Committee added that it will further explore states' needs after the state self-assessment surveys begin.

#### *Structure of Upcoming Report for January 2021 With Interim State Data*

The Committee agreed that the structure of the upcoming report will largely depend on the information submitted by the states and will likely be structured as a narrative of the responses rather than an analysis of submissions. Ms. Kiefer clarified that the platform on which the state self-assessment survey is hosted is available in real time, which means the status of the state self-assessment survey can be reviewed at any time by request of the Committee. The Committee concurred that this would be discussed further at the December meeting.

#### *Timeline for State Response*

The Committee confirmed that a 30-day initial period will be provided for states to complete the self-assessment survey and subsequent extension will be provided by request for an additional 30 days.

**Next Steps**

The next National Advisory Committee meeting will be held virtually on December 9 and 10, 2020.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m. (Eastern).