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### **United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking Releases 2024 Report Centering Survivor Expertise and Highlighting Forced Criminality**

Alaska - The United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking (USACHT) has released its highly anticipated 2024 annual report. This year's report focuses on centering survivor expertise, amplifying the voices of those with lived experience in the sex trades, and emphasizing the urgent need to address forced criminality within anti-trafficking efforts. The report highlights key recommendations to improve federal anti-trafficking work, based on insights gathered during regional trips and consultations with survivor-led organizations.

**Community United for Safety and Protection (CUSP), a survivor-led organization advocating for the rights and safety of people in the sex trades in Alaska, played a pivotal role in shaping the report.** CUSP representatives discussed the impact of state laws on people in the sex trades, the need for law enforcement accountability, and recommendations for improving federal agency implementation efforts to better support individual sex workers and trafficking survivors.

#### **Key Recommendations:**

- **Standardizing Definitions:** The report calls for the Biden administration to address the confusing array of definitions used for sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. These inconsistencies lead to misleading statistics, ineffective policies, and obstacles to evidence-based decision-making.
- **Funding for Survivor-Led Organizations:** The report recommends that the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) direct a portion of its service-oriented grants in each state to organizations that do not participate in trafficking task forces or collaborate with police departments. This recommendation aims to empower survivor-led organizations and ensure that funding reaches those who may be hesitant to engage with law enforcement due to past negative experiences.
- **Recognizing Forced Criminality:** The report underscores the need for all Presidential Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (PITF) agencies to better recognize and support survivors of forced criminality. This includes strengthening training for government employees to identify signs of forced criminality, reviewing policies and protocols to ensure they acknowledge forced criminality, and incorporating representation of forced criminality in public awareness and education campaigns.
- **Addressing Substance Use and Mental Health Coercion:** The report acknowledges the interconnectedness of gender-based violence, human trafficking, complex trauma, substance use, and mental health. It emphasizes the need for trauma-informed care, accessible services, and proactive prevention efforts that address the root causes of these issues.

#### **Survivor Testimonial**

“When I was ‘exited’ from a domestic violence shelter at 3 a.m. in the morning, it was a drug dealer who answered the phone; a flop house that gave me shelter, drugs to get me high, and more drugs used to coerce, force, and manipulate me into being trafficked. None of these people who harmed me went to jail, but I did go to jail for drug related issues.”

— Alaska Native Survivor of Trafficking

Read the full report here:

<https://www.state.gov/united-states-advisory-council-on-human-trafficking-annual-report-2024/>

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