



January 11, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building,  
Washington, DC 20510-0001

The Honorable John Cornyn, Assistant Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
517 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Assistant Majority Leader Cornyn:

We write as organizations and individuals working to end human trafficking with allies across the country, including Kentucky and Texas, and concerned citizens who respect the pressures you face conducting the nation's business.

But the issue we write about is literally a matter of life and death. Last month in Portland Oregon, the family of a 24-year old mother, murdered on Christmas by a man who bought her for sex on Backpage.com, sued the web site for allowing sex trafficking in its ads.<sup>1</sup> The case is similar to testimony heard by the Senate Commerce Committee from the mother of a 16-year-old daughter murdered by a man who bought her via Backpage.com on Christmas Eve.<sup>2</sup>

Congress granted victims of human trafficking a private right of action under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2003 to provide protection and to help prevent this despicable crime. Yet court after court, has ruled the Communications Decency Act (CDA) of 1996 shields Internet Service Providers like Backpage.com from accountability. As a result, online trafficking has surged, online entities continue to facilitate trafficking with

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2017/12/family\\_of\\_woman\\_killed\\_in\\_port.html#](http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2017/12/family_of_woman_killed_in_port.html#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/true-crime/wp/2017/09/19/mother-of-slain-teen-makes-tearful-plea-for-congress-to-amend-internet-law/>

**g3nerations**

**children  
atRisk**  
*Speaking Out + Driving Change for Children*

ELIJAH  RISING



impunity, and victims have no effective legal redress. The First Circuit Court of Appeals pointedly stated, “[T]he remedy is through legislation.”<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, it is time to bring S 1693, Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA) to the floor for a vote. SESTA is the product of years worth of discussion and negotiation. It has the support of the anti-trafficking community, key stakeholders in the Internet community, Law Enforcement entities, private citizen advocates, and concerned firms in the private sector. No more citizens should be murdered, raped, or sexually exploited as a result of a legal loophole.

**As of January 11, 2018, 64 Senators have co-sponsored SESTA. Please hear the cries for help from innocent victims of a perverse, deadly, unintended consequence of the law. Please bring SESTA to a vote as soon as possible in coming weeks!**

Sincerely,

*Ambassadors and Former Members of Congress*

**Linda Smith**, (U.S. Congress 1995-99;  
Washington State Senate/House 1983-94),  
Founder and President, Shared Hope  
International **WA**

**Barbara Kennelly**, U.S. Congress, 1982-  
1998; Professor Trinity Washington  
University **CT**

**Amb. Swanee Hunt**, Author and Former U.S.  
Ambassador to Austria **DC**

**Amb. Mark P. Lagon**, Former U.S.  
Ambassador at Large to Combat Trafficking  
in Persons, Distinguished Senior Scholar,  
Georgetown University **VA**

<sup>3</sup> <http://media.ca1.uscourts.gov/pdf/opinions/15-1724P-01A.pdf>



Empowering Youth. Ending Exploitation.



**Organizations with Anti-Trafficking Programs**

Florence Buchanan, Board Member  
**3 Generations** NY

Tony Talbott, Director  
**Abolition Ohio / University of Dayton Human Rights Center** OH

Shannon Brown, CEO  
**Believe Despite** TX

Katie Martinez, Assoc Dir of Development  
**CHILDREN AT RISK** TX

Taina Bien-Aime, Executive Director  
**Coalition Against Trafficking in Women** NY

Maureen McGowan, RGS, Province Leader  
**Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces** MD

Brigid Lawlor, Province Advocacy Liaison  
**Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces** MD

John Simpson, Privacy & Technology Project Dir.  
**Consumer Watchdog** CA

Tina Frundt, Founder & Executive Director  
**Courtney's House** DC

Kevin Ryan, CEO  
**Covenant House International** AK, CA, GA, FL, LA, MI, MO, NJ, NY, PA, TX

Cecile Roeger, Promoter of Justice & Peace  
**Dominican Sisters of Houston** TX



Jason Matthew, Director of Public Policy & Government Relations <b>ECPAT USA</b>	NY, DC
Micah Gamboa, Executive Director <b>Elijah Rising</b>	TX
Derri Smith, CEO <b>End Slavery Tennessee</b>	TN
Shelby Quast, Americas Director <b>Equality Now</b>	NY
Cherie Jimenez, Director <b>EVA Center</b>	MA
Benjamin Nolot, CEO/Founder <b>Exodus Cry</b>	MO
Marianela Acuna Arreaza, Executive Director <b>Fe y Justicia Worker Center</b>	TX
Kathi Hardy, Executive Director <b>Freedom From Exploitation, Inc.</b>	CA
Rev. Dr. Sunny Philip, Pastor <b>Gateway Christian Center</b>	NY
Deborah Pfluger & Audrey Pfluger, co-Founders <b>Girls with Grit</b>	TX
Melba Robinson, Program Director <b>Haven Atl, Salvation Army</b>	GA
Mary Mazzio, Producer <b>I AM JANE DOE community</b>	MA



Shea Rhodes, Esq, Director <b>Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation at Villanova Law</b>	<b>PA</b>
Pamela Perkins Carn, Director <b>Interfaith Children's Movement</b>	<b>GA</b>
Sarah McCarron, Committee Co-chair <b>Junior League of Chicago, Civil Rights and Social Action Committee</b>	<b>IL</b>
Carol Robles-Roman, President & CEO <b>Legal Momentum</b>	<b>NY</b>
Allaudin Abdulla, Director <b>Love People Not Pixels</b>	<b>TX</b>
Heather Fischer, Mobilization & Partnerships <b>Love146</b>	<b>CT</b>
William D. Lynch, Founder & President <b>Lynch Foundation for Children</b>	<b>CA</b>
Lisa Goldblatt Grace, LICSW, MPH <b>My Life My Choice</b>	<b>MA</b>
Lawrence Couch, Director <b>National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd</b>	<b>MD</b>
Brooke Burris, Director of Policy <b>National Association for Missing and Exploited Children (NAMEC)</b>	<b>NC</b>
Lisa L. Thompson, VP of Research & Education <b>National Center on Sexual Exploitation</b>	<b>DC</b>
Debra Boyer, PhD <b>Organization for Prostitution Survivors</b>	<b>WA</b>

# EXODUS CRY

girls  
with GRIT



Timothy R. Baack, President & CEO <b>Pathfinders Milwaukee, Inc</b>	WI
Kate O'Donnell OSF, Co-chair <b>Committee of the Sisters of St. Francis, Phil.</b>	PA
Dr. Melissa Farley <b>Prostitution Research &amp; Education</b>	CA
Camille Cooper, Director of Government Affairs <b>PROTECT</b>	TN, VA
Barbara Rodriguez, Director <b>Refuge City</b>	TX
Meg Baldwin, Executive Director <b>Refuge House, Inc.</b>	FL
Kari Tamburin, Founder <b>Resurrect Life, Inc</b>	TX
Yasmin Vafa, Executive Director <b>Rights4Girls</b>	DC
Len Pagano, Founder & CEO <b>Safe America Foundation</b>	GA
Michelle Thames, Executive Director <b>Safe Spot Children's Advocacy Center</b>	VA
Rebecca Zipkin, Senior Staff Attorney <b>Sanctuary for Families</b>	NY
Joseph Travers, Founder & President <b>Saved in America</b>	CA
Brooke Burris, Legislative Chair <b>SC Attorney General Human Trafficking Task Force</b>	SC
Linda Smith, Founder & President <b>Shared Hope International</b>	WA



# LOVE146

Joetta Venneman, Director, Office of Social & Environmental Justice  
**Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership** KY

Joetta Venneman, Director, Office of Social & Environmental Justice  
**Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership** KY

Rev. Dr. Marian Hatcher  
**SPACE International USA** IL

Melba Robinson, Founder  
**STRIVE** GA

Autumn Burris, Founding Director  
**Survivors for Solutions** CO

Marjorie Saylor, Board President  
**Survivor Leader Network of San Diego** CA

Rusty Havens, Founder  
**SWLA Abolitionists** LA

Ty Bowden, Director, Men Against Sexual Exploitation  
**The NET** TX

Anne K. Ream, Founder  
**The Voices and Faces Project** IL

Marjorie Saylor, Founder/CEO  
**The Well Path** CA

George Lynch, CEO  
**Traffick911** TX

Kylla Lanier, Deputy Director  
**Truckers Against Trafficking** CO

Mary Frances Bowley, Executive Director  
**Wellspring Living** GA



Nancy Hoffman, State Coordinator <b>West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services</b>	<b>WV</b>
Lauren Hersh, National Director <b>World Without Exploitation</b>	<b>NY</b>
Jennifer Swain, Executive Director <b>youthSpark, Inc</b>	<b>GA</b>





FREEING YOUTH FROM SEX TRAFFICKING



## Individual Advocates

<b>Yvonne Ambrose</b> , Human Rights Activist	<b>IL</b>
<b>Alisa Bernard</b> , Survivor Advocacy Coordinator	<b>WA</b>
<b>Gabriella Cipriani</b> , Anti-Human Trafficking Project Coordinator	<b>OH</b>
<b>Vanessa Forbes</b> , Intervention Coordinator, Elijah Rising	<b>TX</b>
<b>Allison Franklin</b> , Survivor Leader	<b>TX</b>
<b>Kathryn Freeman</b> , Director of Public Policy, Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission	<b>TX</b>
<b>Brittany Gaines</b> , Admissions Specialist, Project Woman	<b>OH</b>
<b>Athena Haddon</b> , Survivor, LIFT	<b>MA</b>
<b>Teena Halbig</b> , B.S., ret. MT(ASCP), President, Kentucky Division of United Nations Association-USA	<b>KY</b>
<b>Rev. Doctor Marian Hatcher</b> , SPACE International USA	<b>IL</b>
<b>Professor Theresa C. Hayden</b> , PhD, MSSW, University of Louisville, KY	<b>KY</b>



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY  
CHARLES WIDGER SCHOOL OF LAW

THE INSTITUTE TO ADDRESS  
COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION



<b>Lois A. Herman</b> , Founder/Coordinator Women's UN Report Network - WUNRN	<b>MN</b>
<b>Hayden Hernandez</b> , Operations Director, Elijah Rising	<b>TX</b>
<b>Jennifer Hohman</b> , Community Leader, #FightForUs	<b>TX</b>
<b>Professor &amp; Carlson Endowed Chair Donna M Hughes</b> , University of Rhode Island	<b>RI</b>
<b>Cynthia Kirby</b> , Administrative Assistant, First Baptist Church Pasadena	<b>CA</b>
<b>Katie Martinez</b> , Associate Director of Development, CHILDREN AT RISK	<b>TX</b>
<b>Ane Mathieson</b> , Policy Fellow, Legal Momentum	<b>NY</b>
<b>Maureen McGowan</b> , RGS, Provence Leader, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd	<b>NY</b>
<b>Clare Nolan</b> , Justice Advocate, Sisters of the Good Shepherd	<b>NY</b>
<b>Chris A. Owen</b> , Women's Rights Advocate	<b>KY</b>
<b>Brad Pfluger</b> , President Pfluger Architects	<b>TX</b>



**Wellspring  
Living**

**Kubiiki Pride**, Mother of Sex Trafficking Survivor **GA**

**Dara Reppucci**, Corporate Counsel, Sanofi Genzyme **MA**

**Katherine Robichaux**, Social Worker, YMCA International Services **TX**

**Loren Runnels**, Associate Professor, Rutgers RWJ Medical School **NJ**

**Jacqueline Santiago-Duran**, Hispanic Community Advocate, Project Woman **OH**

**Carolay Serna**, Survivor Advocate, YMCA International **TX**

**Amy Sickle**, Survivor, Kendleton Farms **TX**

**Linnea Smith**, M.D. **NC**

**Carl Springer**, Coordinator, Village Anti-Trafficking Team **OR**

**Dr. Gabrielle Starr**, Executive Director Ladies of Favor, Inc. **GA**

**Autumn Hanna VandeHei**, Member Advisory Council on Child Trafficking **DC**

**Rev. Ann Weeks**, Diocese of East TN **TN**

**Jeanette Westbrook**, MSSW, Leadership Team, Survivors of Prostitution Abuse Calling for Enlightenment (SPACE Int'l) **KY**