

Life Link will have Victim services funds of \$250,000 over 3 years in the form of match under the DOJ grant. The rest of the grant funds are designated for evaluation, state-wide task force, training, community awareness and outreach. Also to increase State hotline effectiveness of law enforcement response to calls. The Life Link is in the process of securing a 6 bedroom safe house for HT victims and should be operating by December 1, 2015. The rent for the safe house is \$1500 per month, and utilities, operating costs, staff, etc., are additional expenses.

Victim Services are the safety net to allow prosecution, stabilize victims, provide the long term complex services for the myriad of HT victim needs: substance abuse treatment, lack of support systems, lack of economic support, mental illness, access to education, disability, child abuse, chronic and complex trauma needs. We have been providing services without funding since 2009. We have utilized the Medicaid Expansion since 2014 and ensure victims are signed up immediately (within hours) upon identification as HT victim to help absorb costs of services. It can still take 30 days or more to receive Medicaid due to prior enrollments in other states, etc. We access disability entitlements, usually within 6 months to a year, as being a victim of HT, and enduring the psychological and physical abuse, rape, deprivation of sustenance, loss of liberty, etc, is a disabling condition.

Victims of HT are in between the definitions and system cracks of DV, sexual assault, child abuse, homeless, mental illness, poverty, drug addictions, etc. They have already fallen through the cracks of these systems and become an extremely vulnerable population of exploitable individuals. Along with them, is the growing criminal population of traffickers that buy and sell them at will. They don't have a voice to speak out, their abysmal life of servitude is taking place in the shadows of our societies. Services are critical for our rural communities, our native American Indian communities, our immigrant communities, border communities, etc., across the State to be able to provide the safety net needed to ensure we can begin to build the prosecution, protection, prevention and partnerships needed to respond to needs of human trafficking victims.

States need to provide protections for these extremely vulnerable populations through legislation that provides services to them, or we will not have victims coming forward or being identified, as communities lack funding resources to even begin to work with them.