

Attorney General Schimel: Host statewide conference on human trafficking

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MADISON, Wis. – This week, Attorney General Brad Schimel, the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Crime Victim Services (OCVS), and Wisconsin U.S. Attorneys' Offices hosted the 2017 Wisconsin Human Trafficking Conference in Wisconsin Dells, Wis. More than 500 attendees from across the state will learn about the complex issues surrounding the crime of human trafficking.

“To hold traffickers accountable and support survivors, we continue to collaborate at every level,” said Attorney General Schimel. “This conference brings together stakeholders in Wisconsin and around the country who are working to deliver services to survivors and to promote a trauma-informed, victim centered-approach to the investigation, prosecution and eradication of this heinous crime.”

The human trafficking conference will take place over two days with law enforcement, prosecutors, social services personnel, victim advocates, community members and organizations that provide services to victims of human trafficking.

“The U.S. Department of Justice is committed to protecting the victims of human trafficking and bringing those who seek to profit off the exploitation of others to justice. My office will work with our state and local partners to hold those who engage in this horrific practice accountable for their crimes,” said U.S. Attorney Scott Blader.

Workshops will be offered about the neurobiology of trauma, interview techniques for juvenile victims, human trafficking in rural areas, the link to substance abuse and addiction and how to build public-private partnerships to fight trafficking. Local,

state, and federal law enforcement will also teach attendees about federal and state prosecution techniques for human trafficking, labor trafficking investigations, trends in investigations, incorporating probation and parole, and the role of technology in trafficking investigations. Additional presentations are offered on developing community awareness campaigns, communicating with the media, how to build a local human trafficking task force, and how nongovernmental organizations work with survivors. Attendees will hear from a survivor of human trafficking and a national expert on the neurobiology of trauma.

OCVS provided funding and organizational support for the conference, and organization support was also provided by the offices of U.S. Attorneys Scott Blader and Greg Haanstad. A conference planning committee comprised of government and non-governmental agencies worked together to determine the focus and workshop offerings at the conference.

Earlier this year, Attorney General Schimel established the Human Trafficking Bureau within the Division of Criminal Investigation at DOJ, which provides a coordinated statewide strategy to identify, target, and prosecute traffickers in order to combat human trafficking and provide needed assistance to survivors.

A state-level-system Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, co-chaired by Attorney general Schimel and DCF Secretary Eloise Anderson, was established to develop a cross-system, comprehensive, trauma-informed service and response system in Wisconsin for minors who are victims or at-risk of being victims of sex-trafficking. The taskforce is composed of a broad range of stakeholders located across the state committed to serving the victims of this horrific crime.

DOJ encourages both rural and urban public agency executives and business owners, to download and display anti-human trafficking posters. The posters can be downloaded at no cost online. For more information about human trafficking in Wisconsin, and how you can help victims, go to www.BeFreeWisconsin.com.