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**AG Derek Schmidt announces partnership with Rotary to combat human trafficking**

TOPEKA – (January 11, 2022) – The Kansas Office of the Attorney General will partner with Kansas Rotary International districts to increase awareness of and compliance with the new state law enacted last year that requires certain establishments to post information about how to contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline, Attorney General Derek Schmidt announced today.

During the 2021 legislative session, a new law was passed requiring posting of the National Human Trafficking Hotline in certain businesses and public places where the information can be readily available to victims who are being trafficked. The hotline number is 1-888-373-7888. Posting of the hotline number helps connect victims to services and encourages the public to report potential trafficking so an appropriate response can occur. The new law is a result of recommendations made by the attorney general's Human Trafficking Advisory Board (HTAB), which includes members of law enforcement, prosecutors, court personnel, advocates, state agency representatives and survivors of human trafficking who have expertise in this field.

“Since our state’s first anti-human trafficking law was enacted in 2005, Kansas has worked with strong bipartisan support – and with broad support from Kansas communities – to make great strides in combating this crime against human dignity,” Schmidt said. “I commend the Legislature in its efforts to increase awareness of trafficking in Kansas, and I am grateful to our Rotary partners for assisting in this effort to increase awareness.”

The new partnership with Rotary will multiply outreach efforts by equipping Rotarians with talking points and posters to distribute across Kansas. Posters also are available on the attorney general’s website in six languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong, and Korean.

Today is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, which is January 11 each year. Kansas also recognizes January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

Since 2013, the HTAB has been tasked with coordinating public awareness and education initiatives, victim identification and support, and development of a statewide collaborative effort across disciplines and jurisdictions to combat human trafficking in Kansas.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, human trafficking is one of the largest and fastest-growing criminal industries in the world. It involves recruiting, harboring and transporting people for the purpose of exploitation. Both sex trafficking and labor trafficking occur in Kansas and both adults and children are victims.

Combating human trafficking in Kansas has been a priority for Attorney General Schmidt. Since he took office in 2011, the state has improved its legal framework and Kansas anti-trafficking laws reached the top tier of states, as reflected in a national scorecard called the “Protected Innocence Challenge.” Last year, a new and separate challenge for states was issued by the keeper of the scorecard to begin focusing on more-difficult issues such as the criminal justice system’s handling of sex-trafficking victims who themselves commit crimes that victimize others. Schmidt said he anticipates the HTAB and the Legislature to continue discussions on further strengthening the state’s response to human trafficking proposals in 2022 and into the future.

To request additional information about human trafficking, access posters, which businesses are required to display informational posters, or to learn more about potential signs of human trafficking, go to <https://ag.ks.gov/human-trafficking> or contact the attorney general’s victim services toll-free hotline at (800) 828-9745 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m..

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