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Corporal

Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit

March 26, 2014

House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism,
Homeland Security and Investigations Hearing on minor sex trafficking

The Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit's primary responsibility is missing and abducted children. One of the missions is to assist local, state, and federal agencies with the most critical cases in Maryland or with a nexus to Maryland. In an effort to raise public awareness the Child Recovery Unit manages the Amber Alert Program. The unit works with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to post information about missing children and actively investigates cases of missing and exploited children.

Since 2011, the Child Recovery Unit has taken a more active role in Human Trafficking Investigations in the state. Unlike most vice units, the Child Recovery Unit focuses all of their attention on locating juvenile victims of Human Trafficking. The two troopers in the unit are part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Maryland Child Exploitation Task Force. The Task Force provides an integral part in the investigations by providing additional funding and manpower to the troopers.

The Child Recovery Unit treats every girl met as a victim. The unit is not interested in arresting the girls they encounter in prostitution. The goals of the Unit are to locate juvenile victims, offer assistance to adult victims, and arrest and prosecute the traffickers and pimps.

The Child Recovery Unit works hard at building and maintaining a working relationship with the local non-government organizations that provide resources to victims of Human Trafficking. The unit has found that these resources provide valuable assets most importantly to the victim but also by being an advocate for the victim and their families. There are times when the Child Recovery Unit has reached out to these groups to locate placement for homeless children or children who need placement for a period of time. Additionally, the unit has worked with the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice and local non-government organization Turnaround, to identify possible victims of juvenile sex trafficking. This is accomplished by screening children within the local juvenile detention facilities.

Victim service is a fundamental part of the Child Recovery Unit. Once a child victim is located, the troopers work hard to establish and build a rapport with the victims. Whether it is having lunch with a child in placement or making a phone call to another victim, the unit tries to maintain contact with all victims especially throughout the judicial process. The unit has also had success in keeping contact with adult victims who can provide information on additional victims or traffickers down the line.

Since 2011, the Child Recovery Unit with the assistance of the Task Force has made contact with over 300 girls involved in prostitution. These contacts resulted in children being rescued, victims getting assistance, and traffickers being arrested. In 2013, the unit made contact with 184 girls of which 11 were juveniles.

When conducting Human Trafficking Investigations it is essential to cooperate with outside organizations. The Child Recovery Unit receives assistance from backpage.com in regards to the posted online prostitution ads. Backpage.com is the primary posting method for the girls that are contacted by the Unit. Backpage.com provides quick responses to subpoenas and acts immediately to assist with juvenile human trafficking investigations.

While speaking with traffickers in Maryland, it is apparent that there is a concern in their world of the Task Force. It has been said by several traffickers that they are careful to not use juveniles because of the stiff federal penalties that apply. With that being said, the penalties for trafficking adults are not as severe. While we are making significant strides in Maryland, there is still so much more that can be done.

A need in Maryland and presumably nationwide is for more training for the initial responders to missing child cases and human trafficking/prostitution investigations. A good amount of our missing child cases end as a recovery at a hotel. There are various clues that can be found that point to Human Trafficking that aren't very obvious to the responding officer. As Human Trafficking cases increase, so too should training to identify these trends.

In the three plus years that the Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit has been investigating Human Trafficking cases, we have come a long way but there is still a long way to go.

United States House of Representatives
Committee on the Judiciary
Bob Goodlatte, Chairman

"Truth in Testimony" Disclosure Form

Clause 2(g)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives require the disclosure of the following information by witnesses appearing in a nongovernmental capacity.

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Date: March 26, 2014

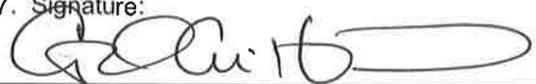
1. Name: <u>Corporal Christopher Heid</u>	2. Entity(ies) you are representing: <u>Maryland State Police</u>
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3. Business Address and Telephone Number:
7155 C Columbia Gateway Dr.
Columbia MD 21046

4. Have <u>you</u> received any Federal grants or contracts (including any subgrants and subcontracts) during the current fiscal year or either of the two preceding fiscal years that are relevant to the subject matter on which you have been invited to testify? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	5. Have any of the <u>entities</u> that you are representing received any Federal grants or contracts (including any subgrants or subcontracts) during the current fiscal year or either of the two preceding fiscal years that are relevant to the subject matter on which you have been invited to testify? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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6. If you answered "yes" to either item 4 or 5, please list the source (by agency and program) and amount of each grant, subgrant, contract, or subcontract, and indicate whether the recipient of such grant was you or the entity(ies) you are representing. (Please use additional sheets if necessary.)

Maryland State Police
- Maryland Child Exploitation Task Force

7. Signature:  Date: 3/26/2014