



# Department of Justice

---

STATEMENT

OF

GRACE CHUNG BECKER  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL  
CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE LAW  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
UNITED STATES SENATE

CONCERNING

"LEGAL OPTIONS TO STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING"

PRESENTED ON

MARCH 26, 2007

**STATEMENT OF**  
**GRACE CHUNG BECKER**  
**DEPUTY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION**

**BEFORE THE**  
**UNITED STATES SENATE**  
**COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**  
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

Good afternoon, Chairman Durbin and Senator Coburn. Thank you for the opportunity to report on the progress the Civil Rights Division has made in our fight against human trafficking, a form of modern day slavery that touches virtually every community in America. The fight against trafficking is a priority of the President and the Attorney General, and I am pleased to report that the Civil Rights Division has undertaken a comprehensive, robust, and aggressive strategy that includes infiltration of the dark places of prostitution and forced labor, rescue of victims and prosecution of perpetrators. In addition, our work includes comprehensive training, design of proactive investigative methodologies, coordination with multi disciplinary task forces in 42 U.S. cities, full-time participation in the interagency Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center, development of partnerships across agencies and with non-governmental organizations, and sharing of intelligence -- all under a concept we call a victim-centered approach. The reward of this effort for the investigators, attorneys and restorative care providers is the knowledge that their efforts support the foundational values of our nation: the liberty promised by the Thirteenth Amendment to our Constitution.

As the Civil Rights Division prepares to celebrate its 50th Anniversary this year, it is an honor to appear before this Subcommittee to talk about the Division's continued efforts in the area of human trafficking. Since 1957, the Civil Rights Division has been

committed to protecting the constitutional rights of all individuals who are forced to labor against their will.

Today, under the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act of 2000, our work means that when young girls from Mexico are offered good jobs in America along with false promises of marriage, and then through deception and coercion are introduced to the dark world of forced prostitution – the Justice Department gets involved. In April 2005, Gerardo Flores Carreto, Josue Flores Carreto, and Daniel Perez Alonso pleaded guilty in federal court in New York to all charges in a 27-count indictment that alleged several criminal violations, including Conspiracy to Commit Sex Trafficking, Sex Trafficking, Forced Labor, Mann Act violations, and Alien Smuggling. The defendants were members or associates of an extended family whose principal business was to profit by compelling young Mexican women into prostitution through force, fraud, and coercion. The defendants, who often lured the women into romantic relationships, used beatings, rapes, deception, psychological manipulation, and false promises to overcome the will of the victims, compel them into prostitution, and force them to turn over virtually all the proceeds to the defendants. The investigation revealed extensive sex trafficking activity between Mexico and the United States, prompting initiatives to coordinate multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency investigations.

On April 27, 2006, Gerardo Flores Carreto and Josue Flores Carreto each were sentenced to 50 years in prison. This is one of the highest sentences ever obtained in a human trafficking case. Daniel Perez Alonso was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Additional defendants were sentenced to shorter terms of incarceration. In addition, at least one defendant is currently awaiting trial on related charges, having been extradited

from Mexico at our request. Some of these young girls had children that they left behind in Mexico with the recruiters' families. Our team worked with the Mexican government to rescue the children and reunite them with their mothers, who now have started a new life through the generous restorative care services provided through our partners at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Our intensified efforts to combat the evil of human trafficking have required us to correct some confusion in the popular media and elsewhere concerning human trafficking—and it is worth a moment to clarify exactly what is meant by the term “human trafficking.” As you know, human trafficking requires the use of force, fraud, or coercion by a trafficker to compel a person into labor, services or commercial sex. Generally speaking, we see two types of cases: Sex trafficking and labor trafficking. Victims of this crime are U.S. Citizens and non-citizens, alike.

Human trafficking is not human smuggling. Human smuggling is the importation of people into the United States via deliberate evasion of immigration laws. Human trafficking, on the other hand, does not require the movement of people or crossing an international border as a necessary element of the offense. In addition, while not all prostitution is human trafficking, prostitutes can be victims. As you know, prostitution has traditionally been and continues to be a crime prohibited by state law and is prosecuted by local District Attorneys across the country. While many people are trapped in prostitution through substance addiction or due to past trauma or abuse (and there are creative interventions for this population, often led by survivors), the jurisdiction of the Federal Government is limited. The federal government cannot prosecute every prostitution case. Rather, the Department of Justice can only prosecute

these types of cases where a federal interest is implicated—such as the Thirteenth Amendment or the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution.

The Civil Rights Division has come a long way in 50 years. Our human trafficking efforts continue at an unprecedented pace. Working with United States Attorney's Offices, the Civil Rights Division has prosecuted 360 human trafficking defendants, secured almost 240 convictions and guilty pleas, and opened nearly 650 new investigations since 2001. That represents a six-fold increase in the number of human trafficking cases filed in court, quadruple the number of defendants charged, and triple the number of defendants convicted in comparison to 1995-2000. In addition, federal prosecutors can bring prosecutions against those who prostitute adults and children in interstate or foreign commerce under the Mann Act.

The Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section ("CEOS") in the Criminal Division is an important partner in our fight against human trafficking, working together with United States Attorney's Offices around the country and our law enforcement partners. As CEOS has specialized expertise in dealing with child victims, in the trafficking area they focus on cases involving child sex trafficking. For example, CEOS has worked with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children through the Innocence Lost Initiative to address the problem of children victimized through prostitution in the United States through. Through January 2007, the Innocence Lost Initiative has led to 697 arrests, 160 informations and indictments, and 136 convictions in both the federal and state systems. CEOS also works child sex tourism cases, often with the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Modern traffickers prey on United States citizens and foreigners alike, exploiting their vulnerabilities to hold them in such forms of service as forced prostitution, domestic service, and migrant agricultural labor. The evil presented by human trafficking can be found wherever there are vulnerable people who can be exploited by others. Thus this modern-day form of slavery does not have any geographic or economic boundaries. Employers in urban centers as well as isolated parts of the economy find it possible to hold their workers in bondage through threats and force. Individuals can be exploited and forced to labor in affluent communities as well as in neighborhoods that have pockets of poverty. In short, this is a crime that can occur anywhere, any time, and against any vulnerable person. The victims we have seen include college students coerced into commercial sex in Atlanta, homeless men forced to work as farm laborers in Florida, and individuals with hearing impairments forced to peddle sign language cards on a New York City subway.

In addition to the Carreto sex trafficking case I spoke of earlier, here are just a few more examples of the recent successes by the Civil Rights Division:

- In May 2006, Jefferson Calimlim Sr. and his wife, Elnora Calimlim, who are both medical doctors, were convicted by a Milwaukee federal jury of Forced Labor. In 1985, the defendants recruited and brought a 19 year old young woman from the Philippines to the United States to be their domestic servant. Over the next 19 years, until federal agents removed her from the house in 2004, the woman was coerced, through fear and psychological harm, into being the doctors' domestic servant for as little as 100 dollars a month. Although the victim in this case was never beaten,

these defendants used psychological coercion to instill a fear of serious harm in the victim. The Calimlins threatened the victim with imprisonment if she disobeyed them, and confined her inside of their home. They did not allow her to socialize, to communicate freely with the outside world, or to leave the house unsupervised. The victim was required to hide in her basement bedroom whenever non-family members were present in the house. The defendants used fear and intimidation to make the victim believe she had no choice but to remain in their service. On November 16, 2006, the defendants were sentenced to serve four years in prison. The court also ordered the defendants to pay the victim over \$900,000 in restitution.

- On April 12, 2006, a 28-count indictment against Harrison Norris, Jr., Aimee Allen, and Cedric Lamar Jackson was unsealed in federal district court in Atlanta, Georgia. The indictment charged that from April 2004 through August 2005, Norris conspired to use force, fraud, and intimidation to recruit women to work as prostitutes. The women were United States citizens. This case first came to light in August 2004, when several young women, left unattended in a store, ran to a police officer for help in escaping the defendants' clutches. The subsequent investigation revealed that Norris would recruit young women through physical force, by paying legal fines or bail for them, and by using false pretenses, frequently offering to train them as wrestlers (Harrison Norris is a retired

professional wrestler, who wrestled under the name “Hardbody Harrison”). According to the indictment, once Norris lured women into his service, his cohorts used physical violence, sexual abuse, threats of force, sleep and food deprivation, constant monitoring, and an elaborate debt system to keep the women working involuntarily as prostitutes. The conspirators also confiscated the women’s mobile phones and identification documents. On May 1, 2006, Allen and Jackson pleaded guilty to Conspiracy. Two other defendants – low level members of the organization – had previously pleaded guilty to giving false statements to federal investigators. A trial date for Norris has not yet been set, and as with every criminal defendant, he remains innocent until proven guilty.

- In June 2006, Abdel Nasser Eid Youseff Ibrahim and Amal Ahmed Ewis-Abd Motleib pleaded guilty to Forced Labor, Involuntary Servitude, Harboring, and Conspiracy. The juvenile victim in this case was nine years old when she was sold into servitude by her parents in Egypt. In 2000, when she was twelve years old, she was brought to the United States and forced to work as domestic servant in the defendants' home. The defendants, who lived in a gated community in Orange County, California, forced the child to cook for a family of seven, clean the entire house, and babysit the defendants’ younger children. Meanwhile, the young girl was forced to eat only leftover food and live in squalor in the defendants' garage. To maintain control over the child, who could not speak English,



the defendants took her passport, assaulted her, and forbade her to have friends or go to school. The defendants also told the girl that they would have her older sister in Egypt reported to the police for previously stealing from the defendants if she left their employ. In October 2006, the defendants each were sentenced to serve three years in prison. They will be placed in removal proceedings and likely deported to Egypt after serving their sentence. The defendants paid \$78,000 in restitution to the victim before sentencing as a condition of their plea agreement.

There is a more complete summary of the human trafficking prosecutions in the *Report on Activities to Combat Human Trafficking, Fiscal Years 2001-2005*, which was published by the Civil Rights Division last year. This report provides greater background on the scope of the human trafficking problem, the tools for investigating and prosecuting human trafficking, as well as an in-depth discussion of successful investigation and prosecutions.

This Administration has been committed to carrying out the provisions of the Trafficking Victims' Protection Act of 2000. In addition to the 600% increase in the number of cases filed, the Civil Rights Division is devoting its resources and expertise to investigating, prosecuting and coordinating complex, multi-jurisdictional cases that involve multiple districts, multiple law enforcement agencies, and numerous victims, and can require the cooperation of other countries. This effort has been made without diminishing the Civil Rights Division's long-standing commitment to the vigorous

prosecution of other important civil rights violations, such as bias-motivated crimes and crimes committed under the color of law.

The Civil Rights Division has adopted a victim-centered approach to investigating and prosecuting these crimes. Law enforcement works very closely with non-governmental service providers, who have expertise in providing much needed services to these vulnerable victims. Many of the groups we work with have a track record of success working with battered immigrant women, migrant workers, victims of torture, or prostitutes attempting to escape the streets. The federal government has tried to nurture these groups through funding and technical assistance from the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime and the Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Refugee Resettlement. We will continue to work together to ensure the victims' safety and housing, to see that their medical and psychiatric needs are taken care of, and to cooperate in normalizing their immigration status to assist the prosecution and to prevent retaliation if they were to return home. This approach is an unprecedented partnership between law enforcement and the non-profit sector, but must be established before we go into a raid and before we interview victims so we can respond to the victims' needs in tandem.

Recognizing the need to work together, the Civil Rights Division has guided the development of anti-trafficking policy and trained thousands of prosecutors, law enforcement agents, and non-governmental organizations - both nationally and internationally - on the implementation of a victim-centered, multi-disciplinary approach to prosecuting traffickers and restoring the rights of their victims. For example, in October 2006, the Justice Department convened the second national anti-trafficking

conference in New Orleans. The Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division played an important role in training over 600 participants from federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, victim advocates, prosecutors, academics and non-governmental victim service providers.

On the international front, Civil Rights Division attorneys have provided training or engaged in information exchanges with dozens of other countries about our efforts to combat human trafficking, including Mexico, Canada, Tanzania, Indonesia, Austria, Germany, Singapore, El Salvador, Czech Republic, Moldova, Belize, Venezuela, Colombia, Russia, Georgia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Poland, Sweden and the Netherlands.

Let me say something about victims. Providing restorative care for victims is the right policy in these cases, and the United States leads the world in the generosity of services and immigration relief it provides to the victims of this devastating crime. An added benefit is that without the empowerment that comes from these services, the victims are unable to tell their story and provide evidence of criminal activity. This victim cooperation is essential to a successful prosecution. Without victim cooperation, human traffickers stand a better chance of going free.

To build on the Civil Rights Division's success in this area, the Attorney General recently approved the formation of the Human Trafficking Prosecution (HTP) Unit in the Civil Rights Division. The HTP Unit is the Department's specialized enforcement unit focused exclusively on combating the crime of human trafficking. The new Unit enhances the Department's ability to investigate and prosecute significant human trafficking and slavery cases, including those that cross jurisdictional boundaries and

involve complex financial crimes. The Unit also serves as a resource for training, outreach, and policy development on human trafficking and slavery issues.

The HTP Unit, while assuming a leading role in many human trafficking prosecution and policy matters, will remain an integral part of the Civil Rights Division's Criminal Section, which not only has a broad base of seasoned trafficking prosecutors, but also has a depth of experience with the civil rights issues that lie at the heart of human trafficking. The launch of the HTP Unit within the Criminal Section will increase the Civil Rights Division's capacity to respond, ever more efficiently and effectively, to the challenges that lie ahead in the struggle to eradicate human trafficking. The Unit is currently staffed with attorneys from within the Criminal Section – there have been no FTEs reprogrammed for this effort.

The HTP Unit provides training, technical assistance and coordination with the 42 Anti-Trafficking Task Forces. These task forces are led by United States Attorneys and funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Department initiated the Task Force program in 2004, and, perhaps not surprisingly, the jurisdictions with Task Forces are the jurisdictions that have seen an increase in trafficking cases. The Task Forces are a locally based, multi-disciplinary approach to investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases. Each task force is comprised of members from the local United States Attorney's Office; federal, state, and local law enforcement; and representatives from non-governmental organizations who reach out to and provide services to restore the victims of this terrible crime. Our goal at the Civil Rights Division is to work closely with our partners in the judicial districts and at the state level.

Of course, all these efforts consume enormous resources. One complex, multiple-victim case alone can require thousands of hours of attorney time. That is why the President, in his proposed budget for fiscal year 2008, has asked Congress for an additional thirteen positions (including eight attorney positions) and \$1,713,000 to address current case demands and to further enhance the Civil Rights Division's anti-trafficking program. With your support, we can continue to build our human trafficking program – to identify and prosecute human trafficking crimes where they occur, and to restore the victims of this terrible crime.

I look forward to answering any questions that the Members of the Subcommittee may have.