



U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking

**Report to Talitha Kum
International Coordination Team**

June 19, 2017



Mission Statement: *U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking* is a collaborative, faith-based national network that offers education, supports access to survivor services, and engages in advocacy in an effort to eradicate modern-day slavery.

Vision Statement: *U. S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking* envision a world without slavery with a network of services and resources to inform the public, prevent the crime and assist survivors to achieve a fulfilling life.



Founded in 2013, USCSAHT is structured as follows:

- Governed by a Board of Directors (not to exceed 15 members)
- Members that pay annual dues (structured to meet the financial capacities of the U.S. congregations of women religious)

Work accomplished through Board-member led committees:

- Advocacy (includes national legislation)
- Communication (written and electronic, including social media)
- Educational Resources



Committees (continued)

- Executive (responsible for the oversight of the day-to-day operations; coordination between all committees; agenda for the Board meetings; etc.)
- Finance
- Membership
- Survivor Services (sharing best practices, contact information for facilities run by sisters and partner organizations, and a scholarship/jobs program)



USCSAHT Partners

- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking and Migration and Refugee Services)
- Talitha Kum in Rome and members throughout the world
- Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)
- Catholic Health Association
- Polaris Project
- Free the Slaves
- Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)
- USCSAHT members (congregations, coalitions, parishes, universities and individuals)
- All coalitions and survivor services represented by our Board members
- Several agencies of the U.S. government



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www.sistersagainsttrafficking.org

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[@USCSAHTraffic](https://twitter.com/USCSAHTraffic)**



Risk factors for trafficking in the U.S.

- 1. Migration/recent relocation/immigration status**
- 2. Substance use/abuse**
- 3. Runaway and homeless youth**
- 4. Mental health concern**
- 5. Unstable housing**
- 6. Victims of sexual abuse/domestic violence**
- 7. Sexual orientation/social discrimination**



Top 5 trafficking locations referenced in overseas cases

1. Mexico
2. Canada
3. Philippines
4. United Kingdom
5. United Arab Emirates



**In 2016, the race/ethnicity of callers to the
National Hotline were:**

- 1. Latino/a**
- 2. Asian**
- 3. White**
- 4. African, African-American, Black**
- 5. Multi-ethnic, Multi-racial**



Foreign nationals who have paid significant recruitment and travel fees often become highly indebted to traffickers and other intermediaries. Traffickers manipulate and control them by leveraging the non-portability of many work visas along with the victims' lack of familiarity with surroundings, laws and rights, language fluency, and cultural understanding.



In the U.S., foreign nationals are often victimized by traffickers from a similar ethnic or national background, on whom they may be dependent for employment or financial support.



Current climate in the U.S. on immigration and human trafficking:

'A gift to human traffickers': report warns of dangers of Trump immigration policy

Immigration expert predicts human trafficking will surge under Trump

Making the vulnerables the victims: Trump's immigration policies will make it worse for human trafficking victims

Trump isn't fighting human trafficking; he's facilitating it



an immigrant
I was a ~~stranger~~
and you welcomed me.

Matt. 25:35

Jesus



Stricter deportation and border regulations will push undocumented immigrants and migrant workers underground, putting them at greater risk of slavery and human rights abuses.



“The Wall” would be 2,000 miles long, 30 feet high, cost \$70 billion to build and \$150 million per year to maintain. “This terrible idea comes at a time when net illegal migration across the border into the United States is close to zero. It also comes at a time when electronic sensing devices and aerial drones can provide a far more cost-effective way of monitoring and controlling the border.”

(Washington Post, Apr. 24, 2017)

TO DATE, ZERO US \$\$ HAVE BEEN APPROVED OR APPROPRIATED FOR MR. TRUMP'S WALL.



Executive Orders on Immigration

Mr. Trump has made “immigration reform” a priority.



1. ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY IN THE INTERIOR OF THE UNITED STATES

This Executive Order directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to identify sanctuary cities, *i.e.* jurisdictions that do not comply with federal enforcement efforts. It also empowers the attorney general to take action against those cities by withholding non-mandatory federal funding.



2. BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

This calls for a wall constructed with “appropriate materials and technology to most effectively achieve complete operational control of the southern border.” It also orders the Secretary of Homeland Security to identify all sources of federal funding which can be allocated for construction and to prepare Congressional budget requests, contradicting Trump’s previous statements that Mexico will pay for the wall. However, he continues to insist that Mexico will reimburse the United States for all costs.



2. BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

In 2016, almost 60,000 unaccompanied minors were apprehended at the US/Mexico border. These individuals are often the children of unauthorized immigrants who are seeking to reunite with their families or escape persecution. A memo from the Department of Homeland Security on this executive order indicates that family members who helped unaccompanied minors illegally enter the United States may be removed or criminally prosecuted.



3. PROTECTING THE NATION FROM FOREIGN TERRORIST ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES

This calls for a 90-day travel suspension for immigrants from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen. This order blocked the entry of both immigrants (green card holders) and nonimmigrants (temporary visa holders) into the U.S. It is widely perceived to be a Muslim ban; however, Mr. Trump insists that the order does not discriminate on the basis of religion.



This Executive Order would also suspend *all* refugee admissions for 120 days, and the entrance of Syrian refugees indefinitely. It directs the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security to prioritize the admission of refugees facing religious persecution, which allows the administration to prioritize Christian, Bahá'í, Yazidi or other refugees from the Middle East over others. Finally, it lowers the current limit on refugee entry to the U.S. from 110,000 per year to 50,000. Over the last ten years, the United States has accepted an average of 62,000 annually. This EO has been declared unconstitutional, and was re-written, but still halted in several district courts. The administration is currently challenging this decision in the U.S. Supreme Court.



*“Grant that immigrants
in search of a dignified life
may find acceptance and
assistance.”*

Pope Francis

However, in the U.S., detaining undocumented immigrants is part of a massive, for-profit industry.



Violation of U.S. immigration laws are civil infractions, *not crimes*. Therefore, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) only detains non-citizens for civil immigration violations. Each day, ICE holds an average of 33,330 immigrants whom it is seeking to remove from the U.S. Most immigrants who are being detained have no criminal convictions or only minor, non-violent convictions. In 2014, 44% of all immigrants removed by ICE had no criminal convictions.



ICE operates 82 detention facilities; yet it houses detainees in more than 375 facilities. Detainees are housed in four types of facilities:

- ICE owned and operated facilities
- Contract detention facilities (owned by private companies)
- Local and state facilities housing criminal inmates
- Bureau of Prisons facilities





Private prison corporations operate 9 of ICE's 10 largest detention facilities.

- ❑ The two largest are Corrections Corporation of American and GEO Group, Inc.
- ❑ There are *several documented reports* of former ICE agents now working for these companies, esp. GEO.
- ❑ Other private-for profit companies used by ICE to detain immigrants are Ahtna Technical Services Corp., Management and Training Corp., and Emerald Companies.



ICE detention facilities cost American taxpayers over \$1.8 billion a year with average bed rates of \$119 a day to detain immigrants for civil infractions.

The non-partisan Government Accountability Office suggests that these costs could even be higher because ICE does not maintain data on all expenditures such as medical and transportation costs.



Among those being detained are asylum seekers, *victims of human trafficking*, people with serious illnesses or disabilities, nursing or pregnant women, and mothers and children. Studies show that placing people fleeing violence in detention aggravates post-traumatic stress disorder. And detention has particularly detrimental effects on children.





Effects on Human Trafficking:

- Policy emboldens/strengthens the traffickers
- Drives victims further “underground”; makes this crime even more hidden than it already is
- Hinders the development of national policy/laws that would protect potential victims of trafficking who may be immigrants or “look like” immigrants – human rights is not a priority
- Increases discrimination against victims who are not U.S. citizens
- Increases need for shelters/safe houses and stresses existing programs and facilities.



Response of the Church to Human Trafficking and Immigration Issues

- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops / Migration & Refugee Services
- USCSAHT
- Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)
- LCWR and individual congregations of religious
- Catholic Charities
- Catholic Health Association/Catholic Health Initiatives
- Catholic Colleges and Universities
- Parishes
- “Sanctuary”



Cardinal Joe Tobin criticizes media portrayals of immigrants that exploit “fear-based news” which highlights violent criminals.

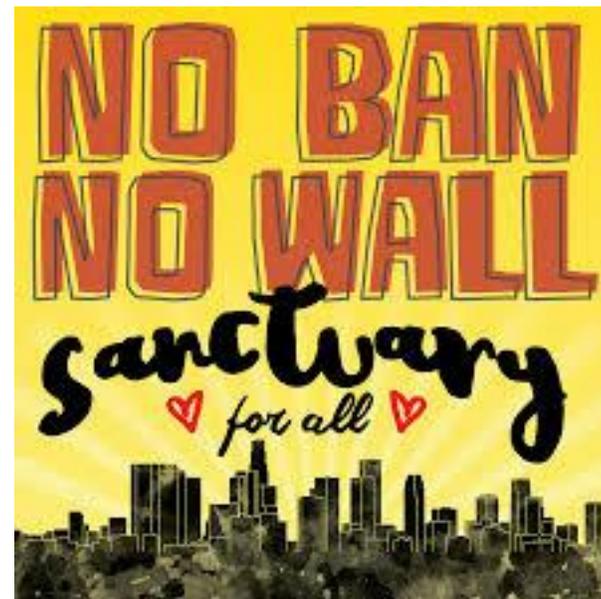
He has stated that standing with those threatened with deportation “puts a face on people who are often dehumanized.”

“Fear cannot have the final word,” he said.



Resources:

- ❑ Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)
<https://cliniclegal.org/resources>
- ❑ U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
<http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/index.cfm>
- ❑ Unlocking Human Dignity: A Plan to Transform the U.S. Immigration Detention System <http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/upload/unlocking-human-dignity.pdf>
- ❑ U.S. Department of State – Trafficking in Persons Report 2016
<https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2016/>





*We envision
a world
without
slavery...*

