



MEDIA RELEASE

Department of Public Safety

Ohio Department of Public Safety • John Born, Director
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John R. Kasich, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 27, 2014

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ODPS Announces Human Trafficking Partnership with Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority

(COLUMBUS) - The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS), a member of Governor John R. Kasich's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, joined the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA), the Collaborative to End Human Trafficking, law enforcement and other social service partners to announce a partnership in which the newly created public awareness campaign materials will be displayed throughout the transit centers, RTA offices and as fliers to passengers.

"As a member of Governor John R. Kasich's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, I am proud to stand here today with our federal, state and local partners working hard to assist victims and prosecute traffickers," said John Born, ODPS Director. "By continuing to work together, we will be able to reach many more Ohioans and educate them on this heinous crime."

Cleveland's Third Annual Human Trafficking Awareness Program, a free, public event, was held at the Tower City Skylight Concourse and highlighted the reality of the crime as well as the cooperative efforts among law enforcement agencies, social service professionals, and the Greater Cleveland RTA to address the issue in northeast Ohio, including prosecuting the crime, protecting victims, and working toward prevention. A resource fair was held afterwards at RTA Tower City Rapid Station at which information regarding human trafficking to those using the RTA trains. The Collaborative's annual program is held in January in recognition of National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

"RTA has joined our partners in the transit industry to create more awareness of the human trafficking issue. It's one more way that RTA is working to help our customers and their neighbors stay safe," said Greater Cleveland RTA District Director, Floun'say R. Cover, Ph.D.

To date, the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force has obtained commitments from more than 60 state agencies, boards and commissions, including:

- The Ohio Department of Agriculture will display window decals with labor trafficking materials on the agency's fleet of vehicles, reaching every county in the state.
- The Department of Public Safety printed 5,000 posters in January, which are available to the public.
- The Ohio Turnpike commission will place posters in 14 service plazas along the Ohio Turnpike, and will use the materials on toll plazas when ad-space is not being used, and will display the materials on Turnpike TV.
- The Department of Youth Services has committed to post materials in their youth facilities and use the campaign to facilitate youth community service projects that partner with local anti-trafficking organizations and shelters.
- The Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections will post the materials in all prisons, along with community-based correctional facilities and halfway houses, potentially reaching 125,000 Ohioans this month alone.
- The Ohio Department of Health has committed to post the materials in STD/TB clinics in every county throughout the state.
- The Department of Jobs and Family Services will post materials in all Ohio Farm Worker Program offices.
- The licensing boards for health professionals (Nursing, Medical, Pharmacy boards) are teaming up in a joint effort to reach their licensees with the campaign materials.
- The Ohio Hispanic and Latino Affairs commission has translated the materials into Spanish, and committed to distribute the materials to Ohio's new immigrant communities.
- The State Library of Ohio distributed posters to all 732 of Ohio's libraries.

In March 2012, Gov. Kasich signed an Executive Order creating the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, charging the group with marshaling state resources to put a stop to human trafficking. In its recommendations made to the governor, the Task Force cited a lack of public knowledge as the most significant barrier to combating human trafficking and determined that an education campaign would be critical to the effort.

