

A Legacy of Robust Research to Better Assist California's Trafficking Victims

A PROPOSAL FOR A ONE TIME \$6 MILLION BUDGET REQUEST FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESEARCH FROM THE CALIFORNIA GENERAL FUND

California's investment in research funding is essential to better understand the prevalence of human trafficking throughout California and to ensure survivors are receiving the highest quality and most effective services. We therefore request that



California lawmakers enact a one-time Budget Request for human trafficking research in the State's General Fund in the amount of **\$6 million.**

By making this investment, Governor Gavin Newsom and the State of California will cement a powerful legacy of combatting human trafficking in California by providing the state with the building blocks to better understand measures that must be enacted and implemented to address this issue.

This \$6 million one-time budget request proposal contains recommendations to fund:

1. A **Prevalence Study** to understand the extent, location, and demographics of human trafficking in California, and
2. A **Comprehensive Evaluation of Service Providers** and recommendations for best practices for serving trafficking survivors in California, based on an evaluative study of the 21 service providers funded under grants from California's Office of Emergency Services for over 5 years.



COALITION TO
ABOLISH SLAVERY
& TRAFFICKING

PROPOSAL FOR FIRST-TIME FUNDING FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESEARCH

I. The Need for Human Trafficking Prevalence Research in California

Human trafficking is a crime in which victims are deceived and coerced into providing forced labor or sexual services for the benefit of their traffickers. California leads the nation in human trafficking incidence based on national hotline “cases” from 2007-2018.¹ Accordingly, California should take a leadership role in researching this pervasive problem and fighting it. However other states have already done more in gathering data to better understand human trafficking in their states.²

Human trafficking is a “hidden crime.” Many victims do not self-identify or self-report, and many do not even recognize they are being trafficked. The involvement of criminal trafficking enterprises in multiple areas (sex and labor) makes it even harder to track. It is estimated that only 10% to 20% of victims ever come into contact with law enforcement or service providers.³ Current victims cannot simply be “counted.” The hidden nature of this crime poses challenges to researchers, but these challenges can be addressed with sufficient investment of resources, which could then lead to cost saving measures in the future as California will know better where to invest to early identify and/or prevent human trafficking.

Unfortunately, while many legislative efforts in California and elsewhere have focused on how best to prosecute and punish traffickers, studies aimed at understanding and reducing trafficking are often underfunded or ignored altogether. In order to address this issue aggressively, California needs a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of human trafficking across the state — including the type of trafficking (sex, labor, or both) and who is being trafficked (adults and/or children, U.S. citizens and/or foreign nationals) and the locations where such trafficking is occurring (rural, urban, or both).

¹ <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/states>. In the 6.5 years from 2012 to mid-2018, California had 6,476 “cases” (trafficking determined to be likely) reported through the national hotline. The next highest state, Texas, had 3,227, approximately half of California’s.

² Both Texas and Ohio have already conducted statewide prevalence studies. See Busch-Amendariz, Noel et al, “Human Trafficking by the Numbers: Human Trafficking by the Numbers: The Initial Benchmark of Prevalence and Economic Impact for Texas,” December 2016; <https://sites.utexas.edu/idvsa/files/2017/02/Human-Trafficking-by-the-Numbers-2016.pdf>; see also Anderson, Valerie, et al, “Estimating the Prevalence of Human Trafficking in Ohio,” Feb. 1, 2019; https://humantrafficking.ohio.gov/links/Ohio_Human_Trafficking_Prevalence_Study_Full_Report.pdf.

³ Carpenter, Ami, et al, “Measuring the Nature and Extent of Gang Involvement in Sex Trafficking in San Diego,” 2016, National Institute of Justice; <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/249857.pdf>. The Carpenter 2016 article cites two other articles as support for a 15–20% figure.

There is currently limited research focusing on the prevalence of human trafficking in the state of California. Much of the data that is currently available is imprecise and not fully representative of the issue. Many local statistics are based on policing priorities, which can be misleading and reflect prioritization of investigating certain populations. California has never undertaken a research study that attempts to evaluate the prevalence of human trafficking statewide.

Robust, comprehensive data will help drive research-informed policies, assist law enforcement with proactive investigations, and help improve services for trafficking victims. Therefore, one-time funding of \$3 million is needed to support a prevalence study on human trafficking for California.

Approximate Prevalence Study Cost Breakdown

The chart below is intended to show how a \$3 million funding allocation may be distributed (in approximate terms) over a three-year period among various necessary costs of a statewide prevalence study.

CATEGORY	BRIEF EXPLANATION	COSTS
Personnel	Salaries & wages for researchers	Year One: \$400,000 Year Two: \$400,000 Year Three: \$400,000 TOTAL: \$1,200,000
Fringe Benefits	Fringe benefits for researchers	Year One: \$40,000 Year Two: \$40,000 Year Three: \$40,000 TOTAL: \$120,000
Travel	Travel to training, field interviews, and meetings	Year One: \$30,000 Year Two: \$30,000 Year Three: \$30,000 TOTAL: \$90,000
Supplies	iPads and software for recording interviews, software for data input and analysis, gift cards to incentivize participation in study	Year One: \$30,000 Year Two: \$30,000 Year Three: \$30,000 TOTAL: \$90,000
Consultants	Consultants to assist in gathering and interpreting complex data sets; pay for sheriff's deputies who are required to observe/guard interview rooms for interviews in detention facilities; contractors to transcribe interviews.	Year One: \$500,000 Year Two: \$500,000 Year Three: \$500,000 TOTAL: \$1,500,000

Prevalence Study Feasibility

This will be the first comprehensive, statewide research study of the prevalence of human trafficking in California. It is estimated a study as complex as this will take approximately three years to fully conduct. Currently, there is very limited research on the prevalence of human trafficking in California. While California is estimated to have the highest rates of trafficking in the United States, there is no comprehensive, robust, statewide research on the annual number of victims, the nature of the trafficking

(sexual exploitation vs. labor exploitation), demographic breakdowns of victims, or concentrations of victims in particular geographic areas within California. This study will involve data mining of reported cases, accessing intake records from victim service providers, and selected locations for primary data collection. Collecting robust data on this information will assist both law enforcement and service providers in understanding the scope and severity of the human trafficking epidemic in California.

Conducting a reliable prevalence study is feasible, as the science of estimating human trafficking victims has evolved over the last ten years. Potential methodologies could include (1) “MSE” (Multiple Systems Estimation) — using multiple known-to-be incomplete lists of victims to estimate the “hidden” victim population⁴, or (2) using interviews within known high-risk populations to estimate the incidence (percentage) of human trafficking within each population.⁵ Moreover, California is rich in potential data. A good study, using these data, can produce reliable prevalence information by either or both of the methods described above. The types of data available in California include the following:

- Existing and ongoing studies in California, or California subsets of larger studies
- Service provider databases
- National Hotline Statistics for California
- Arrest and booking records from law enforcement
- Juvenile court and detention data
- Child welfare (foster care) data on human trafficking
- Homeless censuses
- Selected interviews

While there have been no statewide prevalence studies in California, two prevalence studies have occurred in San Diego County: (1) “Looking for a Hidden Population: Trafficking of Migrant Laborers in San Diego County”, led by Dr. Sheldon Zhang, and (2) “The Nature and Extent of Gang Involvement in Sex Trafficking in San Diego County,” led by Dr. Jamie Gates and Dr. Ami Carpenter. These studies, which focused on only one county, provide a helpful comparison when estimating the costs of a statewide study. Dr. Zhang’s study cost \$522,000 and lasted for three years. The study conducted by Dr. Carpenter and Dr. Gates lasted for two years and cost over \$400,000. Dr. Gates noted, “Estimating the number of victims in this clandestine activity has been profoundly difficult, time consuming and dependent on a wide range of partnerships and trusted relationships in our region that opened the door to the data we needed.” Dr. Zhang advised that covering both labor and sex trafficking in one study raises costs significantly, as these are different markets and require different sampling and field procedures.

⁴ MSE was used in the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime’s estimate of human trafficking victims in the Netherlands, and was used by the UK government to estimate the prevalence of human trafficking in the UK. MSE was also used in the 2018 Global Slavery Index (specific regions) and is currently being used in an ongoing study of the prevalence of human trafficking in the city of New Orleans. MSE has been employed in a number of other contexts, including healthcare. The National Academy of Sciences held a webinar on April 8, 2019 entitled “Estimating the Prevalence of Human Trafficking in the United States,” in which the presenters gave favorable reviews of MSE.

⁵ This method was used in both the 2012 San Diego study of labor trafficking among migrant workers and the 2016 San Diego study of gang influence on sex trafficking, both funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. The State of Texas used this method in a prevalence study completed in 2018.

Dr. Mark Small, JD, PhD, a professor at Clemson University and author of a research report entitled, “Identifying Potential Instances of Human Trafficking: Applying a Novel Template of Indicators to Narratives in Police Incident Reports,” stated that the size and complexity of a prevalence study for the state of California would be a large undertaking. Dr. Small also highlighted the additional cost of studying labor trafficking, which is significantly more time-consuming to research as compared to sex trafficking. He explained that this cost differential is due to a disparity in existing criminal justice records for the two different types of trafficking, which makes data collection more challenging for researchers of labor trafficking.

Based on costs for previous studies which concentrated on one geographic area and one form of trafficking, as well as discussions with the aforementioned researchers in this field, we conservatively estimate that an accurate, robust prevalence study across the state of California which examines both sex and labor trafficking will have a total cost of approximately \$3 million.

The aforementioned Dr. Zhang and Dr. Small, both whom are seasoned researchers with experience studying human trafficking, have both confirmed that a reliable study can be conducted for California. CAST has been in touch with Dr. Zhang, who says that with \$3 million in funding over 3 years, California can launch an unprecedented scale of prevalence estimation beyond what other states have done. Moreover, Dr. Small similarly confirms that a California prevalence study is feasible and likely to produce important information.

II. Funding for Research to Better Serve Trafficking Victims

Since 2014, the California State Legislature has approved annual funding allocations for “qualified nonprofit organizations” providing comprehensive direct services to victims of trafficking. Through these funding allocations (totaling over \$40 million), California’s Office of Emergency Services (“Cal OES”) solicited funding proposals for programs from human trafficking service providers. During the first two and a half years of the Cal OES Program, these programs provided a total of 364,444 comprehensive services to victims of human trafficking, including, but not limited to, crisis counseling, case management, shelter services, and legal assistance. In June 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom signed a state budget into law that established \$10 million *annually* in continuing funding to human trafficking services providers.

Cal OES monitors these service providers by conducting pre-award site visits, making regular performance assessment site visits every two years, and asking service providers for periodic progress reports. However, to date, no funding has been specifically allocated for an independent evaluation of service providers funded by Cal OES, to understand best practices and models of services for the state. After the allocation of these vital funds to 21 service providers — which have assisted over 11,000 survivors to date — the time is now ripe to independently evaluate the programs providing these services across the state and develop specialized recommendations around services models in CA.

In the anti-trafficking movement, there is currently a lack of data around the best practices to serve this highly vulnerable, complex population of trafficking victims. The results of these evaluations can then

be shared statewide with service providers, law enforcement, and legislators so California can take steps to ensure that the services provided to human trafficking victims are evidence-based, trauma-informed, and grounded on practical experience working with the unique dynamics of this specific population in our state. Therefore, one-time funding of an additional \$3 million is needed to perform a comprehensive evaluation of the service providers funded by Cal OES.

Benefits of Conducting an Evaluation of Service Providers

This funding will provide a comprehensive audit and evaluative study of service providers receiving Cal OES grant funding. While there are dozens of service providers offering assistance to trafficking victims in California, the effectiveness and quality of these services has not been rigorously studied. An evaluative study is crucial to ensure that California's funds are being well spent in the most targeted and strategic way possible, in order to provide the greatest number of victims with the highest quality of care as well as educating professionals in a newly emerging field on recommended best practices.

This study can be used to determine best practices for serving trafficking victims statewide, and implemented through training and technical resources offered to service providers. The study's findings can also be provided to the California legislature for purposes of developing new and innovative solutions to assist trafficking survivors comprehensively in California.

Nationwide, very few studies have been done evaluating the efficacy of service provision to trafficking victims. The most recent major study on the topic was completed in 2014 by the Research Triangle Institute ("RTI"), funded by the National Institute of Justice, entitled "Evaluation of Services for Domestic Minor Victims of Human Trafficking." This study was an evaluation of three service providers programs funded by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office for Victims of Crime ("OVC") for domestic minor victims of trafficking, and the goal of the study was to document program implementation in the three programs, identify promising practices for service delivery programs, and inform delivery of current and future efforts by to serve trafficking victims. The study was conducted over a three-year period, focused on only three service providers, and cost a total of \$809,246.

A comprehensive audit and evaluative study of service providers receiving Cal OES grant funding would need to evaluate approximately twenty programs. Given the \$809,246 budget for RTI's evaluation of three programs, a substantially larger amount will be needed to study the 21 service providers across the state of California. We conservatively estimate that such a study will cost a total of \$3 million to study all service providers and also take three years to complete.

III. Cost Analysis

Prevalence Study

Need	Cost	Outcome
Comprehensive, statewide research study of the prevalence of human trafficking in California.	\$3 million.	California will have a data-informed, evidence-based estimate of the prevalence of human trafficking within the entire state. This study will provide valuable demographic information on trafficking victims, in order to help both law enforcement and service providers in strategically targeting their efforts.
Total	\$3,000,000	

Evaluation of Service Providers

Need	Cost	Outcome
Collection and evaluation of robust data on methods and outcomes of the organizations receiving Cal OES grant funding.	\$3 million.	California can evaluate state funded trafficking programs and Cal OES can adjust its Request for Proposal process to ensure that state funded programs are using effective, evidence-based, trauma-informed practices.
Total	\$3,000,000	

IV. Conclusion

In recent years, the California State Legislature has taken important first steps in improving access to comprehensive services by approving one-time funding requests. These funding allocations directed to service providers have greatly impacted and benefitted the victims of human trafficking and the people of California. However, the time is now ripe to enact this one-time budget request of \$6 million for prevalence and evaluation studies, which would provide California and the rest of the United States with crucially needed information about the prevalence of human trafficking and the best methods for addressing the needs of victims. By prioritizing budget request, Governor Gavin Newsom and the legislature will continue to cement a powerful legacy of championing the needs of human trafficking victims. With a one-time funding allocation for these prevalence studies and service provider evaluations, the state of California can help make a dramatic difference and fight to end the pervasive evils of human trafficking in our lifetime.

Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (CAST) Contacts:

- Stephanie Richard, Policy & Legal Services Director, (213)-3655249, Stephanie@castla.org

- Kay Buck, Executive Director (213) 365-0887, Kay@castla.org

COALITION TO ABOLISH SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING

Systemic change is at the core of CAST's mission. Taking a survivor-centered approach to ending human trafficking, CAST has a proven track record of working directly with survivors of human trafficking which builds an important bridge between practice and policy to inform effective policy initiatives. By developing broad-based partnerships, CAST effectively advocates for policies that work to end human trafficking and help survivors rebuild their lives.

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5042 Wilshire Blvd #586, L.A., CA 90036

(213) 365-1906

info@castla.org www.castla.org