



## The Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness

Chairman Dan Burton (R ~ IN)

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Contact: Nick Mutton  
(202) 225-2276

### **CHAIRMAN BURTON TO EXAMINE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Dan Burton (R-IN), Chairman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness, will hold an oversight hearing to examine the actions taken by both the Federal government, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO's) to combat and eradicate the unlawful trafficking of persons.

The Subcommittee's hearing, entitled **"*Trafficking In Persons: The Federal Government's Approach To Eradicate This Worldwide Problem*"** will be held on **Thursday, July 8, 2004, in Room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building at 2:00 p.m.** In addition, the Subcommittee plans to discuss the ways in which the Federal Government and NGO's are working together to help educate our nation's law enforcement agencies, so they are better equipped to assist victims of trafficking.

Stated Chairman Burton, "Although many people believe that slavery is no longer a major global problem in modern times, it is estimated that more than 27 million cases of human trafficking occur every year, which constitutes the highest concentration of slaves in human history. We simply cannot allow these egregious human rights violations to continue."

Human trafficking and slavery take many forms, such as child sex tourism (CST), forced prostitution, child soldiering, involuntary servitude, sweatshop labor, as well as domestic and intensive servitude in industries such as agriculture and construction. The U.S. State Department's annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* reveals there are between 600,000 and 800,000 modern-day slaves being transported across international borders every year. Even more alarming, it is estimated that roughly 14,500 to 17,500 victims of trafficking are brought into the United States each year, despite the fact that slavery – in all its forms – was outlawed nearly 130 years ago, in 1865. The principal reason for these widespread illegal practices is profitability. According to figures released by the State Department, human slavery represents the third most lucrative form of trafficking, next to the drug trade and guns, contributing roughly over \$13 billion every year to the global economy.

The U.S. government has taken several aggressive steps to stem the tide of this global catastrophe. In December 2003, Congress passed H.R. 2620, the *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003*, which expanded the government's anti-trafficking agenda as established in the *Victims Protection Act of 2000*. Some of the new initiatives include additional campaigns to combat sex-tourism, harsher punishments for those convicted of trafficking crimes, and expanded eligibility for victims and certain family members for access to services and funds. H.R. 2620 also stipulates that the Attorney General submit an annual report of their activities to combat trafficking, which was first

released on May 1, 2004. A representative from the Justice Department will be on hand to explain the findings and implications of this inaugural report.

In addition, the Federal Government has worked to assist the victims of these crimes to improve their quality of life. Within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Office of Refugee Resettlement has been instrumental in ensuring the health and well being of victims of trafficking in the U.S. The Subcommittee will hear testimony on the various programs and services that the HHS has implemented to assist these individuals.

Finally, the Federal Government is working alongside several NGO's to further address the multiple facets of the human slavery issue. Representatives from several leading organizations will be on hand to discuss their continuing efforts.

**PANEL ONE WITNESSES:**

**The Honorable John Miller**

Director  
Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons  
United States Department of State

**The Honorable R. Alexander Acosta**

Assistant Attorney General  
Civil Rights Division  
United States Department of Justice

**The Honorable Christopher Gersten**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Administration for Children and Families  
United States Department of Health and Human Services

**PANEL TWO WITNESSES:**

**Mr. Charles Sung**

Director of Legal Services Program  
Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking

**Ms. Michele Clark**

Co-Director  
Protection Project  
Johns Hopkins University - School of Advanced International Studies

**Ms. Brooke McMurray**

Chair  
Safe Horizon, Inc.

**Mr. Derek Ellerman**

Co-Executive Director  
Polaris Project

This is the Subcommittee's second hearing regarding international slavery and human trafficking. For more information, or to look at hearing resource materials, please visit Chairman Burton's designated human rights section on his website at [www.reform.house.gov/WHR](http://www.reform.house.gov/WHR).

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