



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, DC 20530

APR 25 2012

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This responds to your letter to the Attorney General dated April 4, 2012, regarding human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of minors, with particular emphasis on the threats posed by online classified advertising. The Department of Justice shares your concern about trafficking and your commitment to combating this horrible crime and to protecting our most vulnerable citizens.

Indeed, as recently as last night in a speech in Little Rock, Arkansas, the Attorney General highlighted the Department's commitment to improving our efforts to identify and prosecute human traffickers, and to support those who serve and assist victims of these crimes. The Department recognizes your long-standing leadership in this area, and thanks you for your work to heighten public awareness of human trafficking – including within our borders – and your legislative efforts to eradicate it.

Your letter requests an update on the participation of United States Attorney's Offices (USAOs) in task forces that address human trafficking, including internet facilitation of such conduct, and whether a directive has been sent to USAOs on this issue. Moreover, your letter seeks additional engagement by law enforcement, particularly by the Department, on this topic.

Implementation of the CJS conference report language on human trafficking task forces

As a first step in implementing the language contained in the conference report accompanying the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) informed every USAO about the new requirement and surveyed each of the 93 USAOs about their participation in anti-human trafficking task forces.

Approximately two-thirds of USAOs are currently participating in task forces in cooperation with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as various non-governmental organizations, including those providing victim services. Some of these task

forces are operational and focus on criminal investigation and prosecution, while others address related issues such as regional coordination and information-sharing and trafficking victims' unique needs. Most of the USAOs employ a comprehensive spectrum approach in their task force participation: in addition to the United States Attorney, participants from the USAOs may include prosecutors, law enforcement coordinators, and victim assistance personnel. Some of these task forces have received grants and/or other support services from the Department's Office of Justice Programs.

The Department's next step will be to work with the remaining USAOs to identify the human trafficking issues in their districts and to assist them in developing or participating in appropriate new or existing task forces. To that end, EOUSA will be issuing a follow-up memorandum to all United States Attorneys regarding the directive on human trafficking task forces. That memorandum further explains that human trafficking task forces should involve law enforcement, as well as community leaders and civil and faith-based groups that offer support to victims, and should meet quarterly to assist and inform proactive investigations, including investigations of persons or entities facilitating trafficking in persons through the use of classified advertising on the internet, and to ensure the availability of appropriate services for victims. EOUSA will include guidance for USAOs in developing a successful enforcement program, including establishing an effective task force.

Project Safe Childhood—combating child sex trafficking through a coalition model based out of every United States Attorney's Office

In addition to the efforts to meet the Appropriations report requirement described above, the Department's Project Safe Childhood (PSC) initiative already employs a coalition model to combat child sexual exploitation, including domestic child sex trafficking, in each and every one of the 93 USAOs. PSC is a national initiative led locally by each United States Attorney, who is best able to coordinate the resources and expertise of myriad federal, state, and local governmental and non-governmental agencies in his or her district. PSC focuses on building partnerships, coordinating law enforcement, training of partners, and public awareness, all components that go into a successful task force-based model of combating crimes against children.

Initially focused on technology-facilitated crimes against children, PSC was expanded by the Department last year to cover all federal child sexual exploitation crimes, including the domestic prostitution of children. USAOs have conducted assessments of the threats posed in their districts by the new PSC crimes (which also include international travel for sex with children, child sexual exploitation in Indian country, and failure to register as a sex offender), and are now developing strategic plans on how they will expand their PSC coalitions in their districts to address these crimes. In May 2011 and April 2012, the Deputy Attorney General issued guidance memoranda to the field on PSC's expansion. In both of these memoranda, copies of which are attached, the Deputy Attorney General emphasized assessments of the threat posed by domestic child prostitution in each district and the critical need for child victims of prostitution to receive appropriate services and support.

Other task-force-based models and DOJ training efforts to combat human trafficking

In January 2011, the Attorney General launched the Department of Justice's Human Trafficking Enhanced Enforcement Initiative (Initiative), making clear that combating human trafficking is among the highest priorities of the Department of Justice. At that time, each USAO was provided with guidance on how to develop a strategic anti-trafficking plan, including recommended practices for identifying, investigating, prosecuting, and tracking human trafficking offenses, as well as guidance about coordinating and establishing a task force. The USAOs were also directed to ensure that they designated Human Trafficking Points of Contact. The Initiative further included an interagency pilot program designed to streamline coordination among federal law enforcement agencies by convening Federal Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams (ACTeams) in six pilot districts, and the ACTeams began working together in late July 2011.

As you may know, the Department has long taken the lead in investigating and prosecuting the victimization of children here in the United States. For example, in June 2003, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), in conjunction with the Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), launched the Innocence Lost Initiative. Their combined efforts were aimed at addressing the growing problem of domestic sex trafficking of children in the United States. In the nine years since its inception, the initiative has resulted in the development of 46 dedicated task forces and working groups throughout the U.S. involving federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies working in tandem with USAOs. The Innocence Lost Initiative also includes a week-long training program hosted at NCMEC which brings together the relevant stakeholders from given jurisdictions for intensive instruction on the investigation of these crimes and methods of identifying and caring for the victims. According to the FBI, as of April 2012 these groups have worked successfully to recover more than 2,000 children. Investigations have led to the conviction of over 900 pimps, madams, and their associates who exploit children through prostitution. These convictions have resulted in lengthy sentences, including multiple life sentences and the seizure of real property, vehicles, and monetary assets.

From July 12-15, 2011, CEOS and EOUSA conducted a training course called *Investigating and Prosecuting the Prostitution of Children, Project Safe Childhood Seminar*, at the National Advocacy Center in Columbia, South Carolina. The training was for prosecutors investigating cases involving the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The course covered various aspects of child commercial sexual exploitation cases, including trial preparation, how to obtain victim services, unique issues related to these cases, and legal issues that commonly arise in court. Participants heard from attorneys, investigators, and service providers experienced in working with this population. Just last week, from April 17-19, 2012, the Department sponsored the National Law Enforcement Training on Child Exploitation in Atlanta, Georgia, which brought together over 1,700 agents, investigators, prosecutors, victim advocates, and community outreach specialists from all sectors of government around the country. While the training covered a broad range of child sexual exploitation topics, training specific to child prostitution included strategies to effectively investigate and prosecute these cases, obtaining services for child victims of prostitution, and working effectively with these victims during criminal proceedings.

In addition, we work closely with the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) to provide effective training. Our human trafficking experts presented human trafficking training at the NAAG National Conference in Chicago, Illinois in June 2011, at which NAAG President, Attorney General Rob McKenna of Washington State, launched his Human Trafficking Presidential Initiative, and at a NAAG-led human trafficking capacity-building training in Seattle, Washington, in March 2012.

Prosecution efforts against human traffickers who use the Internet to facilitate trafficking

Beyond these task force efforts, the Department, through the Civil Rights Division (CRT), the Criminal Division, and the USAOs and their partners in law enforcement, has continued to investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases as part of their regular duties. These efforts have resulted in an ever-increasing rate of effective prosecutions. As discussed in the Attorney General's Annual Report to Congress and Assessment of U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons for FY 2010 (issued in December 2011), anti-trafficking efforts by CRT and the USAOs during FY 2010 resulted in a record number of human trafficking prosecutions involving forced labor and sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion. FY 2010 also saw the highest number of labor trafficking cases brought, labor trafficking defendants charged, and labor trafficking defendants convicted in a single year. Building on those efforts, the Department also charged a record number of defendants with forced labor and adult sex trafficking crimes in FY 2011.

Your letter encourages the Department to address online classified advertising that could be responsible for facilitating human trafficking. The Department uses all legal tools available to us to vigorously prosecute and convict any perpetrator who engages in or facilitates human trafficking, whether through the internet or by more traditional means. In addition to the case you mentioned in your letter, earlier this month in a case brought under PSC and prosecuted by the USAO for the Western District of Tennessee, the Department convicted a Memphis, Tennessee, man of child sex trafficking for his role in advertising a 15-year-old girl for prostitution on the backpage.com website. The evidence at trial demonstrated that, among other things, the defendant posted an advertisement to the backpage.com website after taking numerous photographs of the 15-year-old victim in lingerie, and he then drove the victim to an individual who responded to the advertisement. In Washington State, in a case investigated by the Innocence Lost Task Force and its partners, and prosecuted by the USAO for the Western District of Washington, a Tacoma man was sentenced last month to ten years in prison for forcing a 16-year-old girl to work as a prostitute by recruiting her and showing her how to advertise on the backpage.com website. In August of last year, the USAO for the District of Maryland, working with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, convicted a defendant of child sex trafficking based on conduct which included posting photographs of a 16-year-old victim to the "escort" section of backpage.com. Finally, as you know, the USAO for the Eastern District of Virginia has actively pursued those who victimize children through prostitution in coordination with the Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Task Force, including among other cases obtaining a life sentence last October for a defendant who forced a 12-year-old victim to engage in prostitution, a 292 month sentence last November for a defendant who ran a juvenile

prostitution business, and obtaining a conviction at trial this past February of a defendant who conspired to commit sex trafficking of a child and who trafficked girls for sex.

You also asked that we recommend legislative initiatives that may be appropriate to assist law enforcement in combating child sexual exploitation crimes facilitated by online advertising. We have already been discussing with your staff some of the relevant issues in this area and look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff as you consider possible legislative initiatives.

We hope this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact this office if we may provide additional assistance regarding this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'm w', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ronald Weich
Assistant Attorney General

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Chaka Fattah
Ranking Minority Member



U.S. Department of Justice

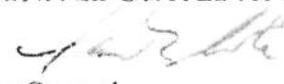
Office of the Deputy Attorney General

The Deputy Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

April 9, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS

FROM: James M. Cole 
Deputy Attorney General

SUBJECT: Project Safe Childhood Strategic Plans

Attorney General Holder has made the protection of children one of the Department's highest priorities. Project Safe Childhood (PSC) has been the premier program among United States Attorney's Offices to protect children from sexual exploitation. As a result of the improved coordination and teamwork that PSC has fostered, the Department has significantly increased the number of prosecutions of child sexual exploitation crimes since 2006. A key reason for this achievement is that PSC is a national initiative led locally by each United States Attorney, who is best able to coordinate the resources and expertise of myriad federal, state, and local governmental and non-governmental agencies in his or her district. The leadership of U.S. Attorneys around the country has been absolutely essential to making PSC a success.

As you know, the Attorney General expanded PSC in May 2011 to include non-Internet related crimes. PSC now covers all federal child sexual exploitation crimes, including domestic prostitution of children, international travel for sex with children, and child sexual exploitation in Indian country, as well as failure to register as a sex offender. This expansion has enhanced the Department's efforts to fight child exploitation on all fronts by helping child victims recover, by training law enforcement and victim service providers to better help children, and by raising public awareness of these serious crimes. By combining these offenses into one program, with a unified point of contact, we have enhanced cooperation, teamwork, and effectiveness by ensuring that in each district, experienced child exploitation investigators will work with the same experienced child exploitation prosecutors, and that these efforts will be effectively supplemented by the Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) and coordinated on a national basis with the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) and CEOS.

To underscore our commitment to expanding efforts to combat child sexual exploitation crimes and to providing our law enforcement professionals with the skills they need to better protect children, the Department hosted a National Strategy Conference on Combating Child Exploitation in San Jose, California from May 17-20, 2011. The Department will also host a National Law Enforcement Training on Child Exploitation in Atlanta, Georgia from April 17-19, 2012. I look forward to seeing as many of you, and as many of your Assistant United States Attorneys working these cases, as possible. Together, these two major training events will have

provided hundreds of classroom training sessions and hands-on digital lab sessions tailored to instruct investigators, prosecutors, and victim advocates on topics as diverse as the latest investigative techniques, computer forensics, emerging technologies, community outreach programs, offender behavior, courtroom advocacy, and issues concerning victims. The National Advocacy Center also sponsored training events on Investigating and Prosecuting the Prostitution of Children in July 2011, on How to Obtain, Prepare, and Present a Child's Report of Sexual Abuse in September 2011, and on PSC Sentencing in February 2012.

Last May I asked each United States Attorney and PSC Coordinator to conduct an assessment in their districts of the threat posed by the additional crimes PSC now covers. I also indicated that each USAO should develop a strategic plan explaining how it will expand its PSC coalition to address these new PSC crimes. Each district prepared a strategic plan at the inception of PSC in 2006, but given the recent expansion of PSC, the changes in law enforcement personnel and resources, and the emergence of new technologies, it is important that we refocus our efforts and direct our resources in the most effective way possible. Of particular importance are the threats posed by domestic child prostitution in each district, including the critical need for child victims of prostitution to receive appropriate services and support. These strategic plans should be completed and submitted to EOUSA and CEOS, by July 31, 2012.

I am very proud of everything that we have accomplished to date, but in light of the increasing complexity and intensity of the threats to our children, as recognized in the assessments that were completed last year, we must do more in the fight to keep each child safe. Accordingly, the Attorney General and I look forward to receiving the strategic plans that U.S. Attorneys develop for expanding PSC in their districts. I also look forward to working with you and your offices in an effort to eliminate the threats to children that must be addressed.



U.S. Department of Justice

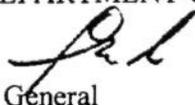
Office of the Deputy Attorney General

The Deputy Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

May 13, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENT COMPONENTS

FROM: James M. Cole 
Deputy Attorney General

SUBJECT: Expansion of Project Safe Childhood

Attorney General Holder re-affirmed on Monday, April 25, that protecting our nation's children was one of his top priorities. As he stated, the Department of Justice will work to ensure "that our children have healthy environments and safe places to live, to learn, and to play." To underscore this commitment, the first topic addressed on EOUSA's new web page which highlights the work of the U.S. Attorneys' offices (USAOs) across the country, will be Project Safe Childhood (PSC). This new page—now available at www.Justice.gov/USAO/Briefing_Room/—will include information on the upcoming National Strategy Conference on Combating Child Exploitation, press releases on significant PSC cases, statistics on convictions and sentences in PSC cases, and prevention and Internet safety resources.

PSC has been the premier program among USAOs to protect children. The increased coordination and teamwork that PSC generated resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation crimes prosecuted in the federal system since PSC's inception in 2006. I firmly believe that a key reason for PSC's demonstrated record of success is that PSC is a national initiative led locally by each U.S. Attorney, who is best able to coordinate the resources and expertise of myriad federal, state, and local governmental and non-governmental agencies in his or her district. Without the dedicated leadership of U.S. Attorneys around the country, PSC simply would not have been a success.

In order to enhance the Department's efforts to fight child exploitation, the Attorney General recently expanded PSC to include non-Internet related crimes. This expansion will enhance the Department's efforts to fight child exploitation on all fronts by helping child victims recover, by training law enforcement and victim service providers to better help children, and by raising public awareness of these serious crimes. PSC now covers all federal child sexual exploitation crimes, including domestic prostitution of children, international travel for sex with children, and child sexual exploitation in Indian country, as well as unregistered child sex offenders. PSC now provides our law enforcement partners with a single, effectual point of contact in each USAO for all federal child sexual exploitation crimes—the USAO's PSC Coordinator. This will enhance cooperation, teamwork, and effectiveness by ensuring that in each district, experienced child exploitation investigators will work with the same experienced

child exploitation prosecutors on the whole range of federal child sexual exploitation cases, and that these efforts will be effectively coordinated on a national basis with the Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section ("CEOS").

It is now incumbent upon all of our department components, including the USAO community, to develop law enforcement strategies that incorporate this expansion. While we already have done much to fight child sexual exploitation, the unfortunate fact is that these crimes continue to grow and plague our children.

Because the involvement of U.S. Attorneys has been so critical to PSC's success to date, U.S. Attorneys should personally organize and lead expanded PSC Coalitions in their districts, working closely with their PSC Coordinators. Specifically, I request that U.S. Attorneys and their PSC coordinators conduct an assessment in their districts of the threat posed by these additional crimes PSC now covers. These assessments should be completed and sent to my office – to the attention of Francey Hakes, National Coordinator for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction – by July 31, 2011. After the threat assessments are completed, U.S. Attorneys should develop a strategic plan as to how they will expand their PSC Coalitions to address these new PSC crimes. By July 31, 2012, after each district has a year to implement their respective strategies, I will ask for written descriptions of these strategies in order to track and develop best practices which can be shared across the Department. I will be particularly interested in U.S. Attorneys' assessments of the threat posed by domestic child prostitution in their districts, and given the critical importance of ensuring that child victims of prostitution receive appropriate services and support, how they intend to integrate providers of such services and support into their PSC Coalitions.

The first *National Strategy* training event, scheduled May 17-20, 2011 in San Jose, California, will be an excellent opportunity for PSC coordinators and their task force members to begin the threat assessment and strategic development process. This training will offer investigators and prosecutors at all levels of government access to some of the finest experts in the ever-changing field of investigating and prosecuting these difficult crimes. This training will include more than 145 lecture sessions and hands-on digital labs tailored to instruct investigators and prosecutors in topics as diverse as the latest investigative techniques, computer forensics, emerging technologies, community outreach programs, offender behavior, courtroom advocacy, and issues concerning victims.

Another opportunity for developing threat assessments and long-term PSC strategies will be the Investigating and Prosecuting the Prostitution of Children Project Safe Childhood Seminar, held July 12-15, 2011, at the National Advocacy Center in Columbia, South Carolina. The seminar is designed for criminal Assistant United States Attorneys, Justice Department attorneys, and local and federal law enforcement officers of all experience levels. The seminar will focus on (1) case creation and development, with an emphasis on the importance of building task forces to combat this growing problem; (2) victim witness issues, including understanding the

Subject: Expansion of Project Safe Childhood

psychology of child victims of prostitution, how to locate and utilize appropriate social services, and how to manage victims throughout the prosecution of a case; and (3) legal issues that frequently arise in these prosecutions.

I am very proud of everything that you have accomplished to date, but in light of the increasing complexity and intensity of the threat, we must do more in the fight to keep each one of our children safe. Accordingly, the Attorney General and I look forward to reviewing the assessments and strategic plans that U.S. Attorneys develop for expanding PSC in their districts. Working together, we will win this fight. Our future quite literally depends on it.