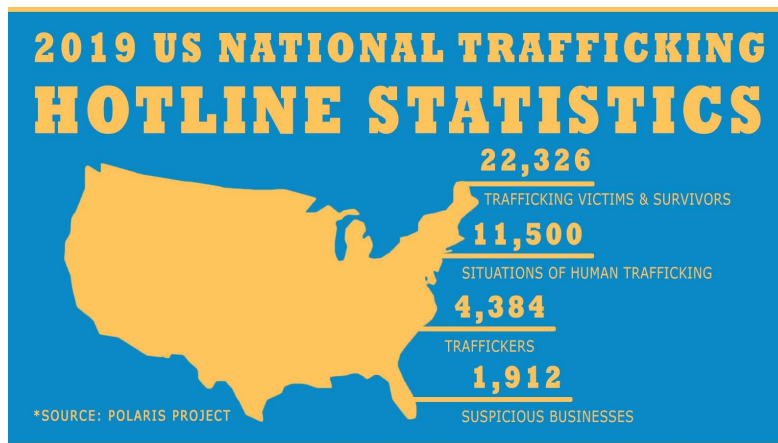




Arkansas House Newsletter

January 7, 2022

Human Trafficking Awareness Month



January is known as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. It is a time for us to educate ourselves about human trafficking and learn to spot the signs of trafficking.

Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons or modern-day slavery, is a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services or to engage in commercial sex acts. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological.

It endangers the lives of millions of people, and it is a crime that knows no borders.

In the 2021 Regular Session, we passed legislation strengthening our laws to combat human trafficking in Arkansas.

Act 798 provides heightened conditions for release on bail for persons accused of human trafficking and human-trafficking related offenses. Under the act, the conditions imposed may include an ankle monitor or GPS-enabled tracking device, restricted movement limited to the person's residence except in the case of a

medical emergency, a restriction on internet access and access to electronic media, and an agreement by the defendant to abide by certain rules.

Act 1106 establishes an affirmative defense for victims of human trafficking accused of certain offenses.

Act 1098 creates the offenses of grooming a minor for future sex trafficking and traveling for the purpose of an unlawful sex act with a minor.

In 2019, the Polaris Project worked on 11,500 situations of human trafficking reported to the Polaris-operated U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline. These situations involved 22,326 individual survivors, nearly 4,384 traffickers, and 1,912 suspicious businesses. Human trafficking is notoriously underreported. Shocking as these numbers are, they are likely only a fraction of the actual problem.

To report suspected human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline **toll-free hotline at 1-888-373-7888** or **text the hotline at 233733**.

You can also chat the National Human Trafficking Hotline via www.humantraffickinghotline.org/chat.