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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

March 4, 2014

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable James B. Comey, Jr.
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Director Comey:

Individuals who are trafficked and commercially exploited through prostitution are often victims who cannot escape from abuse. Many times, these individuals are youth who are neglected or abused by their own parents, or homeless. These youth deserve to be treated as victims and not criminals. Too often law enforcement has treated them as juvenile offenders subject to punishment and incarceration instead of connecting them to services and shelter.

The FBI's recent joint Super Bowl operation reportedly rescued sixteen minors from forced prostitution. According to the FBI's February 4, 2014 press release, its victim specialists provided these children with access to food and clothing and referred them to health care facilities, shelters, and other victim assistance programs. However, much more has to be done to ensure that *all* victims of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) receive proper treatment and that minors do not get victimized again.

As you know, traffickers, pimps, and johns target the most vulnerable of our youth for sexual exploitation — including children in the foster care system, group homes, or homeless shelters. As co-chair of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth, I am working to improve our child welfare system so that minors have the resources and services they need. As Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I want to ensure that our policies actually protect all individuals against these predators.

To better understand what protections are needed and how underage victims are being treated by your agency and law enforcement officials once they are rescued from forced prostitution, please provide responses to the following:

1. The attached press release indicates that the sixteen minors recovered during the subject operation include "high school students and children who had been reported missing by their families." How many of these sixteen minors, if any, were from the foster care system?

2. If any of the sixteen minors were from the foster care system, what services were they provided and by whom? Were these minors sent back to their foster families or biological families?
3. How many of the sixteen minors were referred to a health care facility, shelter, or other victim assistance program?
4. How many of the sixteen minors, if any, were treated as juvenile offenders?
5. The same press release explains, "To date, FBI and its task force partners have recovered more than 3,100 children" as part of the Innocence Lost National Initiative that was established in 2003. How many of these 3,100 children, if any, were from the foster care system?
6. If any of these 3,100 children were from the foster care system, what services were they provided and by whom? Were these children sent back to their foster families or their biological families?
7. How many of the 3,100 children were referred to a health care facility, shelter, or other victim assistance program?
8. How many of the 3,100 children, if any, have been treated as juvenile offenders?
9. Do FBI victim specialists track whether minors who are recovered as part of the Innocence Lost National Initiative actually present themselves to the health care facility, shelter, or other victim assistance program to which they are referred? If so, what percentage of referrals result in services actually being provided?
10. To date, how many minors who were recovered as part of the Innocence Lost National Initiative were rearrested as a minor for prostitution? If the FBI does not track this data, please explain why not.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Please respond by March 28, 2014. Should you have any questions, please contact Jay Lim of my Committee staff at (202) 224-5225.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary

Attachment



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Sixteen Juveniles Recovered in Joint Super Bowl Operation Targeting Underage Prostitution

Washington, D.C.
February 04, 2014

FBI National Press Office
(202) 324-3691

The FBI, in partnership with more than 50 law enforcement agencies, recovered 16 juveniles during an enforcement action focused on commercial child sex trafficking. Additionally, more than 45 pimps and their associates were arrested, some of whom claimed to have traveled to New Jersey from other states specifically for the purpose of prostituting women and children at the Super Bowl.

“High-profile special events, which draw large crowds, have become lucrative opportunities for child prostitution criminal enterprises,” said Ron Hosko, assistant director of the FBI’s Criminal Investigative Division. “The FBI and our partners remain committed to stopping this cycle of victimization and putting those who try to profit from this type of criminal activity behind bars.”

The minors recovered during the Super Bowl operations range in ages from 13 to 17 years old and include high school students and children who had been reported missing by their families.

Additionally, enforcement actions resulted in the recovery of international human trafficking victims.

Over the course of the operation, the FBI’s victim specialists provided 70 women and children services such as food, clothing, and referrals to health care facilities, shelters, and other programs.

Today’s announcement comes after more than six months of localized FBI-led law enforcement preparation. Working with a variety of federal, state, and local partners, the FBI has provided training on how to identify and address child exploitation.

“Through partnerships, enhanced as a result of this operation, we hope to build a lasting framework that helps the community address this problem,” said Michael Harpster, chief of the FBI’s Violent Crimes Against Children Section. “It’s easy to focus on this issue in light of a high-profile event, but the sad reality is, this is a problem we see every day in communities across the country.”

The FBI’s Super Bowl operation efforts are part of the Innocence Lost National Initiative that was established in 2003 by the FBI’s Criminal Investigative Division, in partnership with the Department of Justice and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to address the growing problem of child prostitution.

To date, the FBI and its task force partners have recovered more than 3,100 children. The investigations and subsequent 1,400 convictions have resulted in lengthy sentences, including 11 life terms and the seizure of more than \$3.1 million in assets.

The FBI thanks its local, state, and federal law enforcement partners who participated in Super Bowl enforcement efforts.

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- 02.18.14 FBI Releases Preliminary Semiannual Crime Statistics for 2013
- 02.11.14 FBI Pilots New Reward Program Aimed at Deterring Laser Strikes
- 02.04.14 Sixteen Juveniles Recovered in Joint Super Bowl Operation Targeting Underage Prostitution
- 01.30.14 Carl Ghattas Named Special Agent in Charge of the Counterterrorism Division at the Washington Field Office
- 01.30.14 Gregory D. Cox Named Special Agent in Charge of the Counterintelligence Division at the Washington Field Office
- 01.28.14 Amy S. Hess Appointed to Lead Science and Technology Branch
- 01.17.14 John Giacalone Named Assistant Director of Counterterrorism Division
- 01.15.14 James A. Baker Appointed as FBI’s General Counsel
- 01.13.14 David T. Resch Named Special Agent in Charge of Little Rock Division

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