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Attorney General Steve Marshall Promises “Relentless” Pursuit of Traffickers on Human Trafficking Awareness Day

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall released the following statement in support of Human Trafficking Awareness Day, which is today, January 11.

“Not only is human trafficking a global tragedy, it is heartbreakingly present in our own state of Alabama. Human trafficking is only behind drug trafficking as the second largest criminal industry in the world, with an all-time high of 27 million victims enslaved today. It is hard for us to fathom that such a vile practice as slavery exists in our midst, but we must acknowledge it, be vigilant, and fight it. Right here in Alabama, our interstates--I-20, I-85, I-10 and I-65—are major routes for human trafficking.

“Human trafficking involves victims being used for commercial sex or forced labor. Traffickers target those who are most vulnerable, using threats or torture to wear down its victims and render them powerless to seek help. Tragically, the average age of victims is reported to be 12 years old, and one-third of runaway children are victimized within the first two days of leaving home.

“I want to remind human traffickers of the promise I made them last year: We are coming after you. This year, another promise: We will only become more relentless—until the day we End It.

“My office is working with the Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force in the End It Alabama project to fight this horrific crime. I am pleased that we achieved the passage of important legislation last session. Alabama law now provides better protection to our youth, provides prior victims convicted of certain criminal offenses (because they were trafficked) an opportunity to start fresh, and allows our office to not only go after those who commit this horrible crime criminally, but also civilly.

“We ask that you be watchful of those who may be in trouble. Please do not try to intervene, but instead, immediately report any suspicions to law enforcement. Together, we can save victims, one at a time, and reduce the terrible suffering caused by the trafficking of our fellow human beings. You may call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.”

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