

Iowa Law Enforcement, Community Advocates and Clear Channel Outdoor Unite to Combat Human Trafficking

DES MOINES, Iowa--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- [Clear Channel Outdoor Holdings, Inc. \(NYSE:CCO\)](#), together with local, state and federal law enforcement in central Iowa, today unveiled an out-of-home media campaign to combat human trafficking in the region. For the next four weeks, 30 Clear Channel Outdoor Americas (CCOA) digital billboards across Polk County will display educational messages about human trafficking that alert victims how to “get help to get out” of the life and enlist the help of citizens in the ongoing fight to end this crime.



Clear Channel Outdoor Americas supports local, state and federal law enforcement and non-profits with an anti-human trafficking campaign on 30 digital billboards in Des Moines. (Photo: Business Wire)

[\(NHTRC\) hotline](#) fielded 24 reports of human trafficking in Iowa, with more than half involving minors. Since 2007, the hotline has received reports of nearly 100 incidents.

The [International Labor Organization](#) (ILO) estimates that there are 21 million people worldwide who are victims of forced labor. Of those, ILO estimates that 4.5 million are victims of forced sexual exploitation.

"We want to hold human traffickers accountable in Iowa, and we hope this collaborative

Human trafficking is a form of slavery involving the illegal trade of people for exploitation or commercial gain. Traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to lure their victims, and force them into labor or commercial sexual exploitation. Victims rarely come forward because they fear their traffickers and may also fear law enforcement, and many victims do not come forward due to language barriers.

In 2014, the [National Human Trafficking Resource Center](#)

public awareness effort will help us rescue victims and pursue traffickers on our streets and highways," Attorney General Tom Miller said. "Human traffickers try to keep a low profile. The more eyes we have to help us identify traffickers and their victims, the better off we are."

The outdoor media campaign is a joint effort involving CCOA-Des Moines, the Office of the Attorney General of Iowa, the United States Attorney's Office-Southern District of Iowa, Des Moines Police Department, Polk County Sheriff's Office, Iowa State Patrol, and the FBI.

The digital billboard messages will inform trafficking victims who may be unaware that resources exist to help them, and urge the public to help identify and report suspicious activity. The ads direct passersby to the NHTRC's 24-hour, multi-lingual and confidential hotline for victims and community members.

"Human trafficking is found in our own communities regardless of socio-economic status," Terry Hernandez, executive director, Chrysalis Foundation, said. "In Iowa, we find foster care children and runaways are particularly vulnerable to the commercial sex industry; for Chrysalis, our concern is for girls in our after-school programs across the metro area. Our goal is to collaborate with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to prevent victimization, and recover and provide a path for healing for victims of human trafficking. Chrysalis is grateful to be partnering with Clear Channel and Iowa's law enforcement leadership as we work to unmask this epidemic in our society. This partnership is a major step in providing prevention, awareness, advocacy and victim recognition within our communities."

"Slavery was abolished in our country 150 years ago," said Kellie Markey, founder of a safe house in Des Moines for victims of abuse and sex trafficking. "Yet, children are bought and sold for sex every day in this country. While we are likely to never completely eliminate demand, it is up to community members to make the risks of this trade too great and to ensure the safety and recovery of the survivors of this terrible crime against humanity."

"The FBI, in conjunction with its state and local law enforcement partners will continue to work hard to combat human trafficking. It is a destructive crime impacting not only its victims but society as a whole. Detecting human trafficking is essential to stopping it and an awareness initiative like the one commencing today will work toward uncovering this grievous crime," FBI Omaha Field Office Acting Special Agent in Thomas Metz, said.

CCOA launched its first anti-human trafficking campaign in Philadelphia in 2012 and has since supported campaigns in Baltimore, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, New Jersey, New York, Phoenix, San Francisco, Seattle, and across the entire state of Texas and Indiana. This is CCOA's 17th anti-human trafficking campaign. The data show these campaigns drive calls to the hotline, including tips and requests by victims for help.

"We are proud to be part of such an important campaign to raise awareness of human trafficking in Des Moines and beyond. Billboards and other outdoor media are a powerful way to reach people while also targeting specific audiences, and Clear Channel has a long history of working with law enforcement, government agencies and nonprofits on myriad public safety and community building initiatives," Tim Jameson, president, CCOA-Des Moines, said. "Modern slavery is a pervasive scourge that affects all of us in all of our communities. Knowing there is help and a safe place to go is an important first step in surviving slavery, so we all hope this Polk County campaign will be a strong and visible step

forward in the fight against this important problem.”

About Clear Channel Outdoor Holdings, Inc.

Clear Channel Outdoor Holdings, Inc. (NYSE: CCO) is one of the world’s largest outdoor advertising companies with more than 640,000 displays in over 40 countries across Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America and North America. Reaching millions of people monthly, including consumers in 45 of the top 50 U.S. markets, Clear Channel Outdoor enables advertisers to engage with consumers through innovative advertising solutions. Clear Channel Outdoor is pioneering the integration of out-of-home with mobile and social platforms, and the company’s digital platform includes over 1,110 digital billboards across 38 markets in North America and over 4,700 digital displays in international markets. More information is available at www.clearchanneloutdoor.com and www.clearchannelinternational.com.

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About Chrysalis

A public foundation supporting girls and women in the greater Des Moines area since 1989, Chrysalis funds after-school programs for over 700 girls in metro-area schools, and nonprofit organizations working with girls and women in Greater Des Moines. Chrysalis serves as the lead agency in prevention and public awareness for the Iowa Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Enforcement and Prosecution Initiative.

About the National Human Trafficking Resource Center

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), operated by Polaris, a leader in the global fight to eradicate modern slavery, is a confidential, toll-free lifeline for victims and survivors of human trafficking to reach out for help and for people to anonymously report tips of suspected human trafficking. People can call the NHTRC at 1-888-373-7888 or send a text to Polaris at BeFree (233733), 24 hours-a-day, every day of the year. With bilingual staff, the hotline is available in English and Spanish, and in more than 180 languages through the use of interpreters.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available:

<http://www.businesswire.com/multimedia/home/20150514006066/en/>

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