

TBI, TDOT, Tourist Development Partner on Human Trafficking Initiative

NASHVILLE – Today, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Tennessee Department of Transportation and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development have announced a new initiative designed to raise awareness about sex trafficking in Tennessee.

Beginning this month, visitors to many of the state’s welcome centers and rest stops will see signs posted inside bathroom stalls designed to draw attention to the issue. The signs feature the slogan, “You see a girl who could do anything. He sees a girl he can force to do anything.”

“Sex trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States,” said Margie Quin, TBI Assistant Special Agent-In-Charge and TBI’s representative on the Governor’s Human Trafficking Task Force. “We hope this initiative not only raises awareness in the public, but also gives victims who might see the signs a better chance at a way out.”

“We’re pleased to help lead the state’s efforts to address this kind of crime,” said TBI Director Mark Gwyn. “This is too important to ignore. If this new approach gives just one victim the courage to step forward and get help, it’ll be a success.”

The three state departments joined with the Tennessee Women’s Funds Alliance to expand the reach of its established campaign. The poster features a compelling image along with established warning signs that may indicate someone to be a victim of sex trafficking.

“The Tennessee Welcome Centers host more than 12 million visitors annually,” said Commissioner Susan Whitaker, Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. “With this poster initiative, Tennessee is providing an opportunity to raise awareness on human-trafficking and potentially help victims who are caught in its grip. That is our ultimate goal.”

The Tennessee Human Trafficking Resource Center offers a hotline for those who suspect someone is a victim of trafficking or witness activity believed to be related to trafficking at 1-855-558-6484. For more information on the state’s efforts to address human trafficking, visit <http://stopsextraffickingintn.com>.

