



# Implementation Review: California's Response to Labor Trafficking

Report #278 | February 2024



Milton Marks Commission on California State  
Government Organization and Economy

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The Little Hoover Commission, formally known as the Milton Marks “Little Hoover” Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy, is an independent state oversight agency.

By statute, the Commission is a bipartisan board composed of five public members appointed by the governor, four public members appointed by the Legislature, two senators and two assemblymembers.

In creating the Commission in 1962, the Legislature declared its purpose:

**...to secure assistance for the Governor and itself in promoting economy, efficiency and improved services in the transaction of the public business in the various departments, agencies and instrumentalities of the executive branch of the state government, and in making the operation of all state departments, agencies and instrumentalities, and all expenditures of public funds, more directly responsive to the wishes of the people as expressed by their elected representatives...**

The Commission fulfills this charge by listening to the public, consulting with the experts and conferring with the wise. In the course of its investigations, the Commission typically empanels advisory committees, conducts public hearings and visits government operations in action.

Its conclusions are submitted to the Governor and the Legislature for their consideration. Recommendations often take the form of legislation, which the Commission supports through the legislative process.

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# Letter from the Chair

## February 8, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California

The Honorable Mike McGuire  
President pro Tempore of the Senate  
and members of the Senate

The Honorable Brian Jones  
Senate Minority Leader

The Honorable Robert Rivas  
Speaker of the Assembly  
and members of the Assembly

The Honorable James Gallagher  
Assembly Minority Leader

### **DEAR GOVERNOR AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE:**

In 2019, the Little Hoover Commission began examining California’s response to labor trafficking, a form of human trafficking which involves obtaining labor through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. The Commission released three reports in 2020 detailing steps the state should take to strengthen its response to the issue.

This report examines the degree to which the Commission’s past recommendations have been implemented, and any changes in the status of the issue that have increased the importance of the Commission’s recommendations. The Commission found that the need for an organized, comprehensive state response to labor trafficking has only increased in the years since the Commission released its initial reports. California is recognized as a national leader. How we combat labor trafficking will be a model for other states. We have the resources to make a difference - all that’s missing is the resolve.

The Commission respectfully submits this work and stands prepared to help you address the issue of labor trafficking in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PN'.

Pedro Nava, Chair  
Little Hoover Commission

# ■ Executive Summary

The Commission assessed California's efforts to combat labor trafficking in 2020 and produced three reports that included recommendations to strengthen the state's stance against this horrific crime. Together, in these reports, the Commission offers recommendations to help California coordinate its response to human trafficking, detect labor trafficking, help victims, and bring traffickers to justice.

In 2023, the Commission held a public hearing and sought additional input from five state agencies to learn about progress made towards implementing its recommendations. As part of this follow-up review, the Commission found a growing need for support of labor trafficking survivors. Yet, barriers—such as insufficient resources to identify and prosecute this crime—continue to undermine the state's efforts. These challenges are exacerbated by gaps in state and local leadership that hinder continuity of effort in anti-trafficking work.

## Coordinating Leadership Around Anti-Trafficking Activities

In its initial study, the Commission found that California's response to human trafficking focuses principally on combatting sex trafficking. Additionally, the state lacks a coordinated strategy to target human trafficking statewide. In its report, [Human Trafficking: Coordinating a California Response](#), the Commission recommended the creation of an anti-human trafficking council to build and enhance collaboration among communities throughout the state, study and improve services for survivors of both sex and labor trafficking, and assist in the successful prosecution of human traffickers.

While there have been several legislative attempts to create such a coordinating body, none have been successful thus far. Nonetheless, representatives from regional human trafficking task forces told

the Commission that such an entity would elevate trafficking as an explicit statewide priority, help them to implement strategies to identify labor trafficking, share best practices, and access published case law. California must institutionalize its response to human trafficking through the creation of a state-level centralized hub.

## Uncovering Labor Trafficking

Combatting labor trafficking within California must begin with effectively detecting this crime—whenever and wherever it occurs. Yet, uncovering labor trafficking can be particularly challenging, as few understand the nature of the crime and to the untrained observer, the work itself may appear legitimate. In its report, [Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover this Hidden Crime](#), the Commission identified several strategies to help California better detect labor trafficking, including through increased worker training, public education and outreach, and equal application of statutory protections to help identify and address all forms of child trafficking.

In its review, the Commission found some efforts to improve identification of this crime, such as periodic training on labor trafficking for certain public officials and workers, increased public awareness resources, and legislative attempts to equally address all forms of child human trafficking. While important, these efforts do not meet the scale or scope envisioned by the Commission in its original study. California must expand upon this work to have a chance at significantly reducing labor trafficking. In this report, the Commission reiterates a few such opportunities, including regular and robust support to train public officials to serve as “first identifiers,” expanded worker training opportunities and informational campaigns across industry sectors, and statutory amendments to ensure equal protection against all forms of trafficking.

## Supporting Survivors

California knows far too little about labor trafficking survivors, their specific needs, and programs most helpful in restoring their independence and empowering them to obtain gainful employment. Services for survivors are offered in a patchwork—which can make it difficult for individuals and their advocates to identify help. In its report, [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice\*](#), the Commission called on the state to require agencies that provide services to crime victims and other vulnerable Californians to track service provision to labor trafficking survivors so the needs and demographics of this population can be better understood. To help human trafficking survivors access needed resources, the Commission recommended the state develop a user-friendly online directory that includes all state and local resources for trafficking victims.

State leaders have made efforts to bolster support for trafficking survivors and have encouraged the cultivation of some additional outcomes-based reporting of one state program for trafficking survivors. Yet, more could be done to encourage comprehensive, long-term, objective research to better understand the effectiveness of different types of programs for trafficking survivors and to build an evidence base for best practices. Additionally, the state still lacks a centralized referral tool to share information about the range of services available to human trafficking survivors.

## Bringing Traffickers to Justice

Labor trafficking cases are difficult to pursue for a number of reasons, including that investigations are time-consuming, complex, and resource-intensive, and survivors often are reluctant to come forward. In its report, [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice\*](#), the Commission offered recommendations to help

California hold traffickers accountable for their abuses, including empowering the state labor agency to investigate possible instances of labor trafficking, enhancing cross-agency collaboration and data collection efforts, and increasing training among law enforcement officials.

Lawmakers attempted to establish labor trafficking units in either the Department of Industrial Relations—as the Commission recommended—or the Civil Rights Department. However, because these efforts were unsuccessful, no state agency is mandated to investigate labor trafficking in California. Further, the state still lacks a complete understanding of what is—and is not—working in its efforts to address labor trafficking. To support this work, the state should enhance agency collaboration and do a better job tracking the range of possible labor trafficking enforcement actions (civil, administrative, and criminal) and studying case outcomes to identify best practices. Finally, while some tools exist to help those in the justice system better understand labor trafficking, more is needed to ensure these individuals are adequately prepared to recognize and help victims as well as prosecute traffickers. To this end, the Commission reiterated recommendations for enhanced training opportunities for law enforcement officials and court personnel that detail how to investigate and prosecute cases of labor trafficking under California law.

# ■ Introduction

Labor trafficking is a form of human trafficking that often is hidden, sometimes in plain sight. It can occur within homes or businesses that might otherwise be legitimate, making it challenging to detect. More often, the onus to report is placed on survivors, who, for a variety of reasons—such as fear of deportation or shame—may be resistant to come forward.

The Commission issued three reports in the summer and fall of 2020 on strengthening California’s response to labor trafficking:

- [\*Human Trafficking: Coordinating a California Response\*, \(June 2020\).](#)
- [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover this Hidden Crime\*, \(September 2020\).](#)
- [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice\*, \(October 2020\).](#)

In these reports, the Commission found that the state’s efforts to combat human trafficking primarily focused on sex trafficking rather than labor trafficking. The Commission offered a series of recommendations to help the state develop a coordinated response to labor trafficking, uncover this hidden crime, support survivors, and bring traffickers to justice.

The Commission held a public hearing in September 2023 to learn what progress has been made since issuing its reports. Experts discussed the ways in which state and local leaders and advocates have begun working to improve the state’s response to labor trafficking—and what work is still needed.<sup>1</sup> Five state departments and agencies also submitted testimony to the Commission on progress made towards the Commission’s recommendations. This report presents the Commission’s findings and highlights opportunities for implementation going forward.

## Coordinating Leadership Around Anti-Trafficking Activities

Too little is known about where and how frequently labor trafficking occurs in California and those who endure this crime. Though all forms of human trafficking are illegal in California, the Commission found that the state’s response to human trafficking has principally focused on combatting sex trafficking. The Commission noted in its report, [\*Human Trafficking: Coordinating a California Response\*](#), that no coordinated strategy exists to target trafficking statewide—an oversight that is still missing today.

### What is Human Trafficking?

In California, human trafficking, defined in Penal Code, Section 236.1, involves an action such as recruiting, harboring, transporting, or providing a person for the purpose of providing labor or services. Trafficking cases must involve force, fraud, or coercion to deprive the victim of their liberty—a component that might or might not be present in other crimes.<sup>2</sup>

### EFFORTS TO CREATE AN ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING BODY REMAIN UNREALIZED

To strengthen California’s response to all forms of human trafficking, the Commission recommended the creation of a statewide Anti-Human Trafficking Council to build and enhance collaboration among communities throughout the state, study and improve services for survivors of both sex and labor trafficking, and assist in the successful prosecution of human traffickers. *See the box on page 8 for the Commission’s recommendations on the ways in which a statewide anti-human trafficking body could bolster California’s response to this crime.*

Lawmakers introduced legislation in 2022 and 2023 to create a centralized, statewide anti-trafficking coordinating body, as recommended by the Commission.<sup>3</sup> Despite strong legislative support, both bills failed to move out of the Senate or Assembly Appropriations Committees.<sup>4</sup>

### **California Still Lacks a Statewide Anti-Trafficking Strategy**

In testimony to the Commission, local officials and advocates continued to underscore the value a coordinating body would add to California's anti-trafficking efforts.

Such an entity would elevate trafficking as an explicit statewide priority, help to maximize available resources, allow for the timely sharing of information, and eliminate duplicative work, Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force's Labor Trafficking Subcommittee Co-Chairs Ryann Jorban and Joseph Mellis told the Commission.<sup>5</sup>

Regional human trafficking task forces, which have traditionally focused on combatting sex trafficking, expressed an interest in expanding the scope of their work to include labor trafficking and said a state-level coordinating body could provide critical

## **Key Functions of a Statewide Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force**

The Commission called out key functions that a statewide human trafficking task force should undertake, including to:

- Work with academia to conduct identify industries and locations in which trafficking occurs.
- Compile research and establishing a central database for human trafficking data.
- Create holistic human trafficking public awareness campaigns.
- Develop model training guidelines on victim identification that are trauma-informed and victim-centered.
- Assess California's capacity to provide trauma-informed services to trafficking survivors and identify service gaps.
- Measure the efficacy and impact of anti-trafficking programs.
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date resource directory for human trafficking survivors.
- Recommend statutory changes necessary to facilitate prosecution of human traffickers and assist victims.
- Establish a labor trafficking subcommittee specifically to develop:
  - A compilation of information on existing anti-trafficking state resources.
  - Recommendations to systematically detect labor trafficking using data and other technologies.
  - Standardized screening tools and training curricula for high-risk industries.
  - Best practices for local human trafficking task forces to address labor trafficking and assist victims/survivors.
  - Legal tools and supports for prosecutors.
- Advise the Governor and Legislature on the specific actions, and funding, needed to achieve these tasks.
- Report its work annually to the Legislature.



leadership and expertise. For example, members of the Santa Barbara Human Trafficking Task Force told the Commission that they would benefit from tools to help identify labor trafficking, best practices, and published case law—all of which a state anti-trafficking council could provide. The Task Force currently is working on increasing its labor trafficking focus through capacity building and a needs assessment, but so far has faced challenges in identifying and addressing labor trafficking.<sup>6</sup>

If it existed, a statewide body focused on combatting human trafficking also would be well-positioned to lead studies that investigate where and how this crime occurs. Today, without authoritative data, California's understanding of human trafficking continues to be largely based on anecdotal information and statistics from siloed organizations all using different definitions and identification methods to track and measure rates of human trafficking, Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy for the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) told the Commission. CAST has repeatedly called on California to conduct a statewide human trafficking prevalence study—an action the Commission recommended a California Anti-Human Trafficking Council could accomplish—to improve service delivery planning, inform policy making, and assess outcomes of the state's efforts. However, the state has yet to provide funding for such an effort.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, the Commission found gaps in leadership at the local and state level that hinder continuity of effort in anti-trafficking work. For example, several key individuals who had previously led anti-labor trafficking efforts at the state and local levels no longer do so today. Vulnerable to the changes and realities of appointments or elected positions, some have either left elected office, work under new leadership with different priorities, or have had labor trafficking removed from their office's work assignments. These gaps make it difficult to pass on knowledge or expertise among those working to

combat labor trafficking and create steep learning curves for individuals looking to step into this field. "Does everything go away if the personality who cares about [labor trafficking] isn't there?" Los Angeles County Deputy District Attorney Ryann Jorban rhetorically asked the Commission.<sup>8</sup>

California must institutionalize its response to human trafficking through the creation of a state-level centralized hub positioned to provide continuity of leadership, facilitate information sharing, coordinate among agencies of different jurisdictions, and ensure that survivors across the state have access to the help they need. Failing to do so will continue to place the burden of California's response on local agencies and municipalities and in turn will make the state's collective response subject to the prevailing, and frequently shifting priorities and varying capacities of these agencies.<sup>9</sup>

## Uncovering Labor Trafficking

Combatting labor trafficking within California must begin with effectively detecting this crime—whenever and wherever it occurs. However, identifying labor trafficking can be particularly daunting, as few understand the nature of the crime and to the untrained observer, the work itself may appear legitimate.

In its report, [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover this Hidden Crime\*](#), the Commission offered a number of strategies to help California better detect labor trafficking, including through increased training, public education and outreach, and extended statutory protections.

### **PERIODIC TRAINING FOR SOME STATE OFFICIALS AND OTHER FIRST IDENTIFIERS IS AVAILABLE**

Many types of government officials, such as regulators or code inspectors, have regular access to places where people live and work and are well-positioned to spot the indicators of labor trafficking.

However, few are trained to recognize the signs or respond appropriately. To expand the network of individuals who can identify instances of potential labor trafficking, the Commission recommended the state:<sup>10</sup>

- Ensure that employees who work in agencies or positions that potentially interact with victims receive regular training on labor trafficking.
- Develop policies, procedures, and protocols to track, record, and report suspicious activity.
- Create standardized training materials for first responders that address both general and industry specific definitions.

Since the Commission's study, several state agencies have enhanced training opportunities for investigators and other potential first responders on how to recognize and respond to labor trafficking.

For example, the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) told the Commission that it has "assumed a lead role" in providing training for state officials that may encounter this crime. As an example of this effort, in 2022, DIR hosted a virtual labor trafficking awareness training, which featured guidance from the Department of Justice on how to look for potential signs of human trafficking when performing on-site inspections or communicating with workers. In total, 160 staff attended the event, with participation from the State Contractors Licensing Board, Employment Development Department, Department of Tax and Fee Administration, Civil Rights Department, and Agricultural Labor Relations Board. DIR tentatively plans on holding a similar training in 2024.<sup>11</sup>

Additionally, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services is developing a suite of trafficking-related classes through its specialized training institute, including a one-day basic awareness overview, an advanced three-day course on identifying and investigating human trafficking and responding to victims' needs, and a two-day course focused on

forced labor and labor exploitation. These courses are intended to help first responders and other public safety agencies statewide to identify and assist victims of human trafficking, including labor trafficking.<sup>12</sup>

These new training opportunities are important and a step in the right direction. However, periodic trainings by nature do not include the regular and robust support and accompanying policies and procedures envisioned in the Commission's recommendations. These resources are still needed today.

### **Training Remains Vital in Detection Efforts**

The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking shared that the Commissions' previous reports have contributed to their successful efforts to raise awareness and address labor trafficking among various state and local governmental organizations.<sup>13</sup> Yet, both state and local officials continued to emphasize the outstanding need to implement the Commission's recommendation to train investigators who interact with high-risk populations to recognize the warning signs of labor trafficking. With proper training, these various investigators, non-law enforcement personnel, and other public officials could be a key source of detection and reporting on a range of labor violations, including trafficking, as well as a "force multiplier" for combatting labor exploitation and wage theft.<sup>14</sup> It remains particularly critical that regulatory agencies with the authority to inspect workplaces and employer-provided housing are "trained, resourced, and given the responsibility of documenting evidence of labor trafficking when conducting their inspections."<sup>15</sup>

### **THE STATE MUST BUILD ON BURGEONING PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS**

Much like training for public officials, community education and outreach can increase the number of eyes and ears attuned to labor trafficking. Thus,

increased public awareness of this crime could help the state identify victims and prevent it from occurring in the first place. To strengthen California’s public education efforts, the Commission urged the state to:<sup>16</sup>

- Ensure that state-funded anti-trafficking public awareness campaigns are inclusive of all forms of trafficking and are studied for effectiveness.
- Revise existing industry-specific human trafficking training requirements to encompass both sex and labor trafficking.
- Mandate human trafficking training for employees in high-risk industries. Workers must be knowledgeable about the protections, services, and community support available to them.

The state has begun to increase workforce training and public outreach on human trafficking in a number of specific sectors. For instance, the Civil Rights Department is in the midst of developing a free, on-demand training to support hospitality industry workers in an effort to interrupt and prevent human trafficking in hotels and motels.<sup>17</sup> Further, recently enacted legislation will bolster training for foster families on the signs of child labor trafficking<sup>18</sup> and will help generate public awareness for patrons of hair, nail salons, and related businesses through requirements to post a notice publicizing human trafficking hotlines.<sup>19</sup>

To boost awareness among workers, the Civil Rights Department recently developed an informational brochure to help human trafficking survivors know their rights. The handout—available in six languages—includes information on what actions constitute human trafficking based on California’s laws, emphasizing both labor and sex trafficking scenarios, how to identify signs of trafficking, how to file complaint alleging human trafficking, and the civil remedies available to survivors.<sup>20</sup>

While these efforts are indeed helpful, the state’s public awareness strategy must expand training opportunities and informational campaigns across industry sectors in order to have a chance at significantly reducing labor trafficking in California.

### **Proactive Community Outreach Key to Combating Labor Trafficking**

A sustained and robust program of community outreach is integral to the state’s efforts to root out labor trafficking. In its report, [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover This Hidden Crime\*](#), the Commission described opportunities for the state to leverage data to systematically detect labor trafficking in high-risk populations or industries and offered recommendations to proactively conduct direct worker education and outreach in these areas.

**The state’s public awareness strategy must expand training opportunities and informational campaigns across industry sectors in order to have a chance at significantly reducing labor trafficking in California.**

Stakeholders again emphasized the importance of moving toward a proactive, survivor-focused approach to combatting labor trafficking in California. For example, Los Angeles Deputy County Counsel Joseph Mellis warned against the state’s current, “fundamentally passive” approach, in which the bulk of state resources are centered on law enforcement—which necessitates relying on responding to crime after it has occurred. Instead, he suggested going out into the field and meeting various communities where they gather and live their lives—in markets, community centers, and schools—

## Service Data Indicates Increased Service Use Among Human Trafficking Survivors

In its study, the Commission found that there is a shortage of authoritative data on the specific needs of labor trafficking survivors in California. However, limited available data appear to indicate that more human trafficking survivors are now reaching out for help:

- 441 applications for human (sex and labor) trafficking assistance were received by the Victim Compensation Board in FY 2022-23—up from the average of 170 annual applications that it received in the three years prior to 2020.<sup>21</sup>
- \$7.3 million in wage compensation was awarded to human trafficking victims by the Victim Compensation Board from January 2020 to July 2023.<sup>22</sup>
- Of those served in FY 2021-22 by the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services human trafficking victim assistance program, 21 percent, were survivors of labor trafficking and nine percent were survivors of both sex and labor trafficking.<sup>23</sup>
- One in five clients served by the Coalition to Abolish Slavery (CAST) between July 2022 and June 2023, experienced labor trafficking—a 14 percent increase in clients served compared to the prior two years.<sup>24</sup>
- 28 individuals are on CAST’s waitlist to obtain legal services, such as for visas that provide protection to victims of human trafficking.<sup>25</sup>

This data is not without limits and likely represents a severe undercount of the number of human trafficking survivors in the state. Those most likely of being abused are those least likely to complain or ask an agency for assistance. When individuals do reach out for help, the agencies that provide services to crime victims do not always inquire about the type of abuse a survivor sustained or specifically note whether an individual was a labor trafficking survivor as opposed to a sex trafficking survivor or a survivor of some other type of crime. Further, not all service providers operate in partnership with the state, and thus are not required to report data about the number of individuals served or the circumstances of their abuse. Even among those who participate in state-funded human trafficking programs, many still do not differentiate between the types of clients’ experiences. Disaggregated data on service provision to labor trafficking survivors would help the state better understand the needs and demographics of this population.

Nevertheless, some service providers suggest the state could make better use of available data to begin to understand how best to effectively help labor trafficking survivors—as recommended in the Commission’s report.<sup>26</sup> For instance, CAST recommends using data on the number of survivors accessing services and obtaining legal relief—such as from the above programs or civil litigation—in combination with data on labor trafficking arrests and convictions to measure how effectively the state is addressing labor trafficking.<sup>27</sup>

would be more effective.<sup>28</sup> The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking echoed this sentiment, encouraging the state to address labor trafficking through a human rights framework and public health approach that is trauma-informed, evidence-based, and that is meaningfully centered around a diversity of survivor voices.<sup>29</sup>

Amplified by stakeholder perspectives, the Commission reiterates its previous recommendations and urges the state to employ these proactive and survivor-focused strategies in its fight against trafficking.

### **CONTINUED NEED TO ENHANCE STATUTORY PROTECTIONS FOR ALL FORMS OF TRAFFICKING**

California's response to human trafficking continues to overwhelmingly prioritize sex trafficking. This disproportionate emphasis is evident in the state's investment, or lack thereof, in anti-labor trafficking activities and in programmatic language that does not encompass victims of all forms of trafficking.

In [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover this Hidden Crime\*](#), the Commission called on lawmakers to update existing laws, and ensure that new laws that address human trafficking, equally address all forms of this crime.

For example, the Commission specifically urged the state to update the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) program to equally address all forms of trafficking. Yet today, California continues to provide unequal statutory protections to child human trafficking survivors. CSEC funds county prevention and intervention services for children who are, or are at-risk of becoming, victims of sexual exploitation—but not forced labor.

In 2022, legislators proposed expanding the CSEC program to include all children who are victims of human trafficking, including those who are victims of child labor trafficking. However, the bill failed due in

part to opposition from the County Welfare Directors Association over concerns that this reform would bring forced labor victims under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court.<sup>30</sup> The Commission continues to support enhanced statutory protections for all forms of trafficking as California state leaders further their efforts to combat human trafficking.

## **Supporting Survivors**

Like survivors of other forms of abuse, labor trafficking survivors would benefit from a range of supports. Yet, because the state has not studied the unique service needs of labor trafficking survivors, little is known about the specific types of help they need, or which programs are most effective in serving them. Further, in its report [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice\*](#), the Commission found that services are offered in a patchwork with no centralized referral tool—which can make it difficult for victim advocates and survivors to find help even when it is available.

To prioritize victim services for labor trafficking survivors, the Commission called on the state to develop a greater understanding of victims and their needs and increase the visibility of support them access help.

### **BETTER UNDERSTANDING SURVIVORS' NEEDS**

In [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice\*](#), the Commission found that far too little is known about labor trafficking survivors, their specific needs, and programs most helpful in restoring their independence and empowering them to obtain gainful employment.

The Commission recommended that the state require agencies that provide services to crime victims and other vulnerable Californians to track service provision to labor trafficking survivors so the needs and demographics of this population can

be better understood. In addition, the Commission called on the state to research and evaluate the efficacy of service programs, assess the overall impact of these programs to ensure survivors receive appropriate care, identify any gaps in service needs.

In the years since the Commission released its reports, state leaders have made efforts to bolster support for trafficking survivors and have encouraged the cultivation of some additional outcomes-based reporting.

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) funds community-based organizations that provide comprehensive services to sex and labor trafficking victims through its Human Trafficking Victim Assistance Program. The state has increased financial support for this program in recent years. Lawmakers augmented the ongoing \$10 million annual allocation for this program with temporary additional funding, resulting in total spending between \$17 to \$27 million each year between 2021 and 2025.<sup>31</sup> The program is also supported by \$1.6 million in federal funds.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, Cal OES has taken some steps to improve how it tracks service provision to survivors. Subrecipients of the Human Trafficking Victim Assistance Program grants must now collect, evaluate, and report service delivery and outcomes data for all human trafficking victims served, including tracking client safety, well-being, social connectedness, and self-sufficiency.<sup>33</sup> Cal OES also shared that it plans to revise its reporting requirements for recipients of grant funding to disaggregate data in a way that allows for better identification of services labor trafficking victims most use.<sup>34</sup>

Despite this progress, subrecipients of this grant program only represent a fraction of service providers across the state who knowingly or unknowingly assist labor trafficking survivors. More could be done to encourage comprehensive, long-

term, objective research to better understand the effectiveness of different types of programs for trafficking survivors and to build an evidence base for best practices.

### **SURVIVORS WOULD BENEFIT FROM MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AVAILABLE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS**

Trafficking survivors can access help through a patchwork of services throughout California. State government offers a number of support services for trafficking victims—mainly through the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the California Victim Compensation Board. Survivors also may benefit from other state programs, such as cash assistance for immigrants, or federally-administered programs, including CalFresh. Community organizations too offer their own supports and resources to survivors.

But the Commission found that locating and accessing this assistance can be challenging for survivors and their advocates.<sup>35</sup> To make it easier for those to find and access the help they need, the Commission urged the state to create an online directory that includes all state and local resources for trafficking victims. As envisioned by the Commission, this user-friendly website would:<sup>36</sup>

- Include information on the types of programs and services available to trafficking survivors, as well as how and where to access them.
- Be searchable by location and service, making it easier to identify help in all parts of the state.
- Utilize plain language, allowing for better comprehension and enabling translation into multiple languages.

Though the state still lacks a centralized means to share information about the range of services available to human trafficking survivors in California, the Commission found that individual

departments are now working to raise awareness of the services and supports they offer to human trafficking survivors. For example, the California Victim Compensation Board is conducting outreach, providing training to law enforcement officers and others on how to inform victims of the resources available to them, participating in events increasing awareness of the benefits they provide.<sup>37</sup>

To promote use of its services among human trafficking survivors, the Civil Rights Department also is working to boost awareness of its civil enforcement authority and develop stakeholder partnerships with human trafficking experts and organizations.<sup>38</sup>

Many service providers also have shifted their focus to better identify and serve victims of labor trafficking as well as sex trafficking, according to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services. This includes additional training for victim service advocates and partner organizations like hospitals, co-locating human trafficking caseworkers in locations where survivors may seek help and developing local multi-disciplinary teams with expertise in addressing the needs of labor trafficking survivors.<sup>39</sup>

Outreach from individual departments and providers can play a vital role in ensuring that survivors are able to access help and are aware of the benefits available to them. However, as the Commission previously noted, it is crucial that survivors understand the wide variety of programs and services available and how and where to access them.

## Bringing Traffickers to Justice

In California, traffickers face both criminal and civil action and administrative sanctions from a variety of local, state, and federal agencies. At the state level, the Department of Justice may pursue criminal penalties for these crimes, while the Civil Rights Department may pursue civil penalties. Similarly,

at the local level, County District Attorneys and City Attorneys also have jurisdiction to pursue these cases through criminal, civil, or administrative means. The Commission found that these cases are difficult to prosecute for a number of reasons, including that investigations are time-consuming, complex, and resource-intensive, and survivors often are reluctant to come forward.

In its report, [\*Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice\*](#), the Commission offered several recommendations to hold traffickers accountable for their abuses, including empowering the state labor agency to investigate possible instances of labor trafficking; enhancing cross-agency collaboration and data collection efforts; and increasing training among enforcement officials.

### **STILL NO STATE AGENCY EMPOWERED TO INVESTIGATE LABOR TRAFFICKING**

Finding instances of potential labor trafficking, then effectively investigating and building cases to successfully prosecute these crimes is challenging. Detecting labor trafficking can be complicated by the fact that government officials often operate in silos. Law enforcement, for instance, is typically responsible for addressing the criminal aspects of trafficking crimes, but these officials are often unfamiliar with the employment context of labor trafficking and may dismiss potential cases as employment problems. Meanwhile, several state agencies have authority to investigate criminal activities and violations inherent in labor abuses, including trafficking crimes. Yet none has a mandate to specifically investigate labor trafficking complaints.<sup>40</sup>

To help bring traffickers to justice, the Commission recommended that the state empower the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) to lead efforts to pursue labor trafficking alongside its other work to combat the underground economy.<sup>41</sup>

## Labor Trafficking Prosecutions Remain Rare

While hundreds of labor trafficking survivors seek help annually in California, in its report, *Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice*, the Commission noted that on average less than 30 cases are prosecuted throughout the state each year.<sup>42</sup> These cases remain rare:

Since 2018, the Department of Justice has received at least 39 complaints of potential human trafficking. The majority of these came through as referrals from the Labor Enforcement Task Force, a multi-agency effort led by the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) to combat the underground economy,<sup>43</sup> while 11 were identified by the Department's regional Human Trafficking-Sexual Apprehension teams. Just one of these cases—a referral from the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office—has resulted in a successful prosecution thus far.<sup>44</sup>

The Civil Rights Department also continues to receive few trafficking complaints. Of the 73,909 complaints the department received between 2020 and 2022, just 62 alleged human trafficking. Of these, five were investigated and none were ultimately prosecuted.<sup>45</sup> The department noted ongoing challenges due its lack of peace officers or a field enforcement team positioned to identify trafficking cases and its reliance on complaints or referrals from crime victims who may not be aware of how to come forward.<sup>46</sup>

Local, District, and City Attorneys also are empowered to pursue instances of labor trafficking, but the data about these efforts is not systematically collected making it difficult to know how often—and by what means—they are pursued. For example, the San Diego Human Trafficking Task Force—a multi-agency cooperative effort comprised of state, federal, and local law enforcement officers and victim service providers—has received seven referrals, three of which the San Diego District Attorney's Office was able to prosecute.<sup>47</sup> In San Diego County, the District Attorney's Office, through its Workplace Justice Unit, is working to target the full spectrum of labor exploitation—from wage theft to labor trafficking.<sup>48</sup>

With such authority, the department could not only identify and respond to potential complaints, but also take a proactive role in analyzing available data to systematically detect labor trafficking. For example, the Commission envisioned analyzing data from wage and hour violations and worker visa programs to identify possible trafficking hotspots among various industries or geographies in the state.<sup>49</sup>

In 2022, lawmakers drafted a bill to establish a unit within the DIR to investigate labor trafficking complaints and coordinate with the Civil Rights

Department and Department of Justice, respectively, on potential civil or criminal action.<sup>50</sup>

However, this bill was vetoed by Governor Newsom with a message that the Civil Rights Department “is the appropriate state entity to take the lead on this effort” as it is “already active in this space and could seamlessly expand its efforts to more aggressively combat labor trafficking provided that it is given new resources in the budget.” The Governor also noted that the Division of Labor and Standards Enforcement within DIR, “does not have the authority



to criminally or civilly prosecute these types of cases nor have the tools and resources necessary to assist labor trafficking survivors.”<sup>51</sup>

Similar legislation was reintroduced in 2023: one bill reiterated the proposal to establish a labor trafficking unit within DIR, and a second proposed establishing a similar unit within the Civil Rights Department. Both were held in either the Senate or Assembly Appropriations Committees.<sup>52</sup>

Today, no state agency is equipped with sufficient resources to investigate the full spectrum of labor exploitation in California and local law enforcement agencies typically face resource constraints when conducting these investigations. The State Labor Commissioner’s Office (a branch within DIR that enforces the state’s labor laws and works to combat wage theft), for instance, has just two sworn criminal investigators for the entire state of California. Last year, the office received 19,000 complaints. If just one percent of these were found criminally liable, each investigator would be responsible for almost 100 investigations per year from the complaint-based cases alone.<sup>53</sup>

By empowering the Department of Industrial Relations to take a lead role in investigating allegations of labor trafficking, the state could help gather the information necessary for prosecutions and begin to take steps to proactively target worker outreach efforts in appropriate industries or geographic hotspots. To be effective, it is also critical that the department be appropriately resourced to take on this work.

### **CALIFORNIA WOULD BENEFIT FROM ENHANCED AGENCY COLLABORATION AND TRACKING OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Labor trafficking investigations are often intricate and can require the expertise of various agencies and special investigators. Yet, there is no mechanism to track labor trafficking enforcement activities across

the state, so it remains difficult to know how many of these cases are initiated, investigated, and eventually brought forward across California.<sup>54</sup>

The Commission recommended that the state create standardized means for federal, state, and local agencies to track labor trafficking referrals or complaints; share information among jurisdictions; and provide technical assistance to support cases. Further, to increase prosecutions and enhance learning from successful cases, the Commission called on the state to do a better job tracking the range of possible labor trafficking enforcement actions (civil, administrative, and criminal) and study case outcomes to identify best practices.<sup>55</sup>

The lack of relevant data about where and how labor trafficking occurs, the number of investigations initiated in response to these types of complaints, and the outcome of these investigations continues to make it difficult to track labor trafficking enforcement activities across the state, assess needs, fund programming and focus resources on the most effective processes, Ryann Jorban, Co-Chair of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force’s Labor Trafficking Subcommittee, told the Commission. However, this information is vital, she added, in helping to create realistic expectations, best practices, and meaningful insight into the effectiveness of various programs to ensure workers are paid fairly and treated with dignity.<sup>56</sup>

California must understand what is—and is not—working in its efforts to prosecute labor traffickers. But in order to do so, the state must ensure that it is collecting appropriate data and has established the necessary information sharing agreements among relevant agencies.<sup>57</sup>

## **MORE COULD BE DONE TO TRAIN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COURT PERSONNEL**

In [\*Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice\*](#), the Commission found that the difficulties in detecting labor trafficking, the potential under-reporting of the crime, and the complexities in proving the crime are major barriers to successful prosecutions. These same barriers persist today, according to officials with the California Department of Justice.<sup>58</sup>

Some tools exist to help court officials better understand human trafficking, the Commission learned. However, these typically focus primarily, or entirely, on sex trafficking. Without specialized training on labor trafficking, prosecutors and other law enforcement officials may not understand how other state laws and regulations may impact their case or to explain how and what type of evidence can be used to sustain a jury trial conviction.

To help better prepare state law enforcement officials and court personnel to combat labor trafficking, the Commission called for enhanced training opportunities that detail how to investigate and prosecute cases of labor trafficking under California law. This training, the Commission added, should include relevant regulations that apply to labor trafficking cases in various sectors and industries and case studies that demonstrate how to build successful cases.

The Department of Justice told the Commission that it provides some training on labor trafficking for local agencies seeking to prosecute labor trafficking. Moreover, the agency is currently developing a training focused on human trafficking for judges in partnership with the Judicial Council.<sup>59</sup>

In order for California to mount an aggressive response to labor trafficking, it remains vital that those in the justice system—in cities, counties, and

state courts—are adequately prepared with the tools necessary to recognize and help victims and prosecute traffickers.

## **Conclusion**

The need for an organized, comprehensive state response to trafficking has only increased in the years since the Commission released its initial reports. Some victim service organizations now report serving an increasing number of clients over the past two years.<sup>60</sup>

Individuals working diligently in this field shared that the Commission's reports helped shed light on this crime, driving home how much labor exploitation costs our state in dollars and human potential. Yet, labor trafficking remains an often-hidden crime.

Lawmakers have made several attempts to build a coordinated, statewide response to trafficking, but none have been successful thus far. Without a systemic means to identify and address labor trafficking, these crimes will continue to fall under the radar, perpetuating abuses against vulnerable workers.

For the health, safety, and well-being of those working across the state, California leaders must take a stronger stance in the fight against labor trafficking. As recommended in the Commission's reports, this would entail working to proactively detect this crime wherever it occurs, training workers to know their rights and resources available to help them, and pursuing all means to hold traffickers accountable for their crimes.

The Appendix on page 19 includes summarizes of all recommendations stemming from the Commission's three reports on labor trafficking. Together, these provide the state with a foundation for a robust, statewide, anti-human trafficking strategy that equally addresses all forms of this crime.

# Appendix: Legislative Implementation on Commission Labor Trafficking Recommendations<sup>61</sup>

Recommendations	Implementation Status	Passed Legislation	Attempted Legislation
<b>Coordinated Leadership</b>			
Create an Anti-Human Trafficking Council within the Governor’s Office to study the prevalence of labor trafficking, coordinate efforts to fight the crime, and assess the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts.	No Progress		<p><b>AB 1149 (Grayson):</b> Would have established a statewide task force to examine collaborative models to combat trafficking, evaluate the state’s progress on this issue, and provide recommendations for further work against human trafficking. <i>Held in the Assembly Appropriations, 2023.</i></p> <p><b>AB 2553 (Grayson et al.):</b> Would have established a state-level task force to review collaborative models between governmental and nongovernmental organizations for protecting victims and survivors of trafficking, among other related duties. <i>Held in Senate Appropriations, 2022.</i></p>
<b>Uncovering Labor Trafficking</b>			
Train officials most likely to encounter labor trafficking to serve as first identifiers.	No Progress		
Increase awareness through outreach campaigns and expanded training opportunities.	Partially Implemented	<b>AB 1661 (Davies):</b> Requires hair, nail, and related businesses to post a notice publicizing human trafficking helplines. <i>Chapter 106, Statutes of 2022.</i>	
Study ways to improve enforcement of the Transparency in Supply Chain Act of 2010.	No Progress		
Update laws protecting child sex trafficking victims to include child labor trafficking victims.	Partially Implemented	<b>SB 584 (Jones):</b> Requires foster families to receive training about child labor trafficking. <i>Chapter 548, Statutes of 2021.</i>	<b>AB 2628 (Reyes):</b> Would have revised a state program that addresses commercially sexually exploited children to include all children who are victims of human trafficking. <i>Held in Assembly Appropriations, 2022.</i>
<b>Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice</b>			
Track service provision to labor trafficking survivors, research and evaluate the efficacy of these programs, and develop and maintain a user-friendly directory of all state and local resources for trafficking survivors.	No Progress		

Recommendations	Implementation Status	Passed Legislation	Attempted Legislation
<b>Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice (continued)</b>			
Empower more state agencies to investigate labor trafficking crimes.	<b>No Progress</b>		<p><b>AB 380 (Arambula):</b> Would have established a Labor Trafficking Unit within the Department of Industrial Relations to receive, investigate, and prosecute complaints alleging labor trafficking and take steps to prevent it. <i>Held in Senate Appropriations, 2023.</i></p> <p><b>AB 235 (Rubio):</b> Would have established a Labor Trafficking Unit within the Civil Rights Department to receive and investigate complaints alleging labor trafficking and take steps to prevent labor trafficking. <i>Held in Assembly Appropriations, 2023.</i></p> <p><b>AB 1820 (Arambula):</b> Would have established a state-level unit to investigate and prosecute complaints alleging labor trafficking. <i>Vetoed, 2022.</i></p>
Create standardized means for agencies to track referrals or complaints, share information, and provide technical assistance to cases.	<b>No Progress</b>		
Track enforcement activities, including criminal, civil, and administrative remedies and study outcomes to identify best practices.	<b>No Progress</b>		
Ensure officials are adequately trained to investigate and prosecute labor trafficking cases.	<b>No Progress</b>		

# Notes

1. Little Hoover Commission. "Report Implementation Status Hearing." September 28, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-A8qgNbvIpc>.
2. Note: For details on the forms and elements of labor trafficking, see Little Hoover Commission. "Human Trafficking: Coordinating a California Response." Page 7. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/human-trafficking-coordinating-california-response>.
3. Little Hoover Commission. June 2020. "Human Trafficking: Coordinating a California Response."
4. Assembly Bill 2553 (Grayson, 2022) and Assembly Bill 1149 (Grayson, 2023).
5. Ryann Jorban, Deputy in Charge of the Labor Justice Unit and the Economic Justice Unit, Consumer Protection Division, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office; and Joseph Mellis, Deputy County Counsel, Affirmative Litigation and Consumer Protection Division, Office of the Los Angeles County Counsel. Both are Co-Chairs of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
6. Santa Barbara Human Trafficking Task Force. September 15, 2023. Megan Riker-Rheinschild, Director, Victim Witness Program, Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office (SBCDA); Tiffany Carty, Supervisor, Victim Witness Program, SBCDA; Yleana Anda, Project Lead, Victim Witness Program, SBCDA; and Distinguished Professor Emeritus Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara. Conversation with Commission Staff.
7. Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy. Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
8. Ryann Jorban, Deputy in Charge of the Labor Justice Unit and the Economic Justice Unit, Consumer Protection Division, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and Co-Chair of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. Verbal Testimony to the Commission. September 28, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-A8qgNbvIpc>.
9. Ryann Jorban, Deputy in Charge of the Labor Justice Unit and the Economic Justice Unit, Consumer Protection Division, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office; and Joseph Mellis, Deputy County Counsel, Affirmative Litigation and Consumer Protection Division, Office of the Los Angeles County Counsel. Both are Co-Chairs of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
10. Little Hoover Commission. September 2020. "Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover this Hidden Crime." Page 19. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/uncovering-trafficking>.
11. Katrina S. Hagen, Director, Department of Industrial Relations. November 15, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
12. Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. November 28, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
13. Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy. Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
14. Ryann Jorban, Deputy in Charge of the Labor Justice Unit and the Economic Justice Unit, Consumer Protection Division, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and Co-Chair of Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
15. Evan Ackiron, Special Assistant Attorney General, California Department of Justice. November 17, 2023. Letter to the Commission. Also, Ryann Jorban, Deputy in Charge of the Labor Justice Unit and the Economic Justice Unit, Consumer Protection Division, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office; and Joseph Mellis, Deputy County Counsel, Affirmative Litigation and Consumer Protection Division, Office of the Los Angeles County Counsel. Both are Co-Chairs of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
16. Little Hoover Commission. "Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover this Hidden Crime." September 2020. Page 20. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/uncovering-trafficking>.
17. Mary Wheat, Acting Executive Officer, California Civil Rights Department. November 1, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
18. Senate Bill 584 (Jones), Chapter 548, Statutes of 2021.
19. Assembly 1661 (Davies), Chapter 106, Statutes of 2022.
20. California Civil Rights Department. "California Law Protections You From Human Trafficking." August 2023. <https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2023/12/Human-Trafficking-FAQ-ENG.pdf>.
21. Note: According to the Victim Compensation Board, of the 2020 applications 48 percent were for sex trafficking, 12 percent for labor trafficking, and 40 percent were undetermined. Source: Lynda Gledhill, Executive Director, California Victim Compensation Board. November 1, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
22. Note: Per Assembly Bill 629 (Smith, Chapter 575, Statutes of 2019), CalVCB is authorized to award wage compensation (\$10,000 per year for a maximum of two years) to victims of human trafficking. Source: Lynda Gledhill, Executive Director, California Victim Compensation Board. November 1, 2023. Letter to the Commission.

23. Note: In fiscal year 2021-22, the human trafficking victim assistance program served a total of 5,930 individuals: 4,187 sex trafficking survivors (70 percent), 1,233 labor trafficking survivors (21 percent), and 510 (nine percent) survivors of both sex and labor trafficking. Source: Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. November 28, 2023. Letter to the Commission. Also, Leigh Bills, Victim Services Branch Chief, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. Communication with Commission staff.
24. Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy. Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
25. Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy. Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
26. Little Hoover Commission. “Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice.” October 2020. Pages 11-13. <https://lhc.ca.gov/sites/lhc.ca.gov/files/Reports/252/Report252.pdf>.
27. Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy. Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
28. Joseph Mellis, Deputy County Counsel, Affirmative Litigation and Consumer Protection Division, Office of the Los Angeles County Counsel and Co-Chair of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
29. Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy. Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
30. Assembly Bill 2628 (Reyes, 2021).
31. Note: Total annual General Fund allocations to the Human Trafficking Victim Assistance program: Fiscal Year 2020-21: \$10 million; FY 2021-22: \$20 million; FY 2022-23: \$20 million; FY 2023-24: \$27 million; FY 2024-25 (anticipated): \$17 million; FY 2025-26 (anticipated): \$17 million. Source: California State Budget 2021-22. Page 149. <https://ebudget.ca.gov/2021-22/pdf/Enacted/BudgetSummary/FullBudgetSummary.pdf>. Also, Assembly Budget Committee. Floor Report of the 2023-24 Budget. October 16, 2023. Page 160. [https://abgt.assembly.ca.gov/system/files/2023-10/floor-report-of-the-2023-24-budget\\_october-16-2023.pdf](https://abgt.assembly.ca.gov/system/files/2023-10/floor-report-of-the-2023-24-budget_october-16-2023.pdf).
32. Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. November 28, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
33. Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. November 28, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
34. Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. November 28, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
35. Little Hoover Commission. “Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice.” October 2020. Page 11. <https://lhc.ca.gov/sites/lhc.ca.gov/files/Reports/252/Report252.pdf>.
36. Little Hoover Commission. “Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice.” October 2020. Page 13. <https://lhc.ca.gov/sites/lhc.ca.gov/files/Reports/252/Report252.pdf>.
37. Lynda Gledhill, Executive Director, California Victim Compensation Board. November 1, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
38. Mary Wheat, Acting Executive Officer, Civil Rights Department. November 1, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
39. Nancy Ward, Director, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. November 28, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
40. Little Hoover Commission. “Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice.” October 2020. Page 15. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/labor-trafficking-strategies-help-victims-and-bring-traffickers-justice>.
41. Little Hoover Commission. “Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice.” October 2020. Pages 15 and 17. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/labor-trafficking-strategies-help-victims-and-bring-traffickers-justice>.
42. Little Hoover Commission. “Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice.” October 2020. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/labor-trafficking-strategies-help-victims-and-bring-traffickers-justice>.
43. Note: The Department of Industrial Relations cited that the Labor Enforcement Task Force has made 27 referrals of potential human trafficking to the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice (DOJ) noted that the Department of Industrial told them that they have referred a total 29 complaints concerning labor trafficking to DOJ since 2018. Source: Evan Ackiron, Special Assistant Attorney General, California Department of Justice. November 17, 2023. Letter to the Commission. Also, Katrina S. Hagen, Director, Department of Industrial Relations. November 15, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
44. Note: In June 2022, the Department of Justice (DOJ) secured a guilty verdict in the case, *People v. Gamos*, which took place in San Mateo County Superior Court.

- One additional case, a referral from the DOJ's Sacramento-based Human Trafficking Sexual Predator Apprehension Team, may be prosecuted.
45. Note: By comparison, the department received 31 total human trafficking complaints (out of 56,579 total received) in 2018 and 2019. Of those, all but three were closed after finding that the facts alleged did not meet the elements of human trafficking. Source: Kevin Kish, Director, Civil Rights Department. May 28, 2020. Written Testimony to the Commission.
  46. Mary Wheat, Acting Executive Officer, Civil Rights Department. November 1, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
  47. Evan Ackiron, Special Assistant Attorney General, California Department of Justice. November 17, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
  48. Summer Stephan, District Attorney, San Diego County. Verbal testimony to the Commission. Report Implementation Status Hearing. September 28, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-A8qgNbvIpc>.
  49. Little Hoover Commission. "Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Uncover this Hidden Crime." September 2020. Page 19. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/uncovering-trafficking>.
  50. Assembly Bill 1820 (Arambula, 2022).
  51. Office of Governor Gavin Newsom. AB 1820 Veto Message. September 13, 2022. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/AB-1820-VETO-message.pdf>.
  52. Assembly Bill 380 (Arambula, 2023) and Assembly Bill 235 (Rubio, 2023).
  53. Ryann Jorban, Deputy in Charge of the Labor Justice Unit and the Economic Justice Unit, Consumer Protection Division, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and Co-Chair of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. September 28, 2023. Testimony to the Commission.
  54. Little Hoover Commission. "Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice." October 2020. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/labor-trafficking-strategies-help-victims-and-bring-traffickers-justice>.
  55. Little Hoover Commission. "Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice." October 2020. Page 24. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/labor-trafficking-strategies-help-victims-and-bring-traffickers-justice>.
  56. Ryann Jorban, Deputy in Charge of the Labor Justice Unit and the Economic Justice Unit, Consumer Protection Division, Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and Co-Chair of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force. September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
  57. Little Hoover Commission. "Labor Trafficking: Strategies to Help Victims and Bring Traffickers to Justice." October 2020. Page 23. <https://lhc.ca.gov/report/labor-trafficking-strategies-help-victims-and-bring-traffickers-justice>.
  58. Evan Ackiron, Special Assistant Attorney General, California Department of Justice. November 17, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
  59. Evan Ackiron, Special Assistant Attorney General, California Department of Justice. November 17, 2023. Letter to the Commission.
  60. Leigh LaChapelle, Associate Director of Survivor Advocacy. Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). September 28, 2023. Written testimony to the Commission.
  61. Note: The Appendix identifies only Commission-supported legislation that implements, or attempted to implement, its recommendations.

# ■ Little Hoover Commission Members

## **CHAIRMAN PEDRO NAVA | Santa Barbara**

Appointed to the Commission by Speaker of the Assembly John Pérez in April 2013 and reappointed by Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon in 2017 and again in 2021. Government relations advisor. Former State Assemblymember from 2004 to 2010, civil litigator, deputy district attorney and member of the state Coastal Commission. Elected chair of the Commission in March 2014.

## **VICE CHAIRMAN ANTHONY CANNELLA | Ceres**

Appointed to the Commission by the Senate Rules Committee in March 2022. Civil engineer and principal with Northstar Engineering Group. Former State Senator from 2010 to 2018. Previously served on the Ceres City Council and was twice elected mayor of that city. Elected Vice Chair of the Commission in July 2023.

## **DION ARONER | Berkeley**

Appointed to the Commission by the Senate Rules Committee in April 2019. Partner for Aroner, Jewel, and Ellis. Former State Assemblymember from 1996 to 2002, chief of staff for Assemblymember Tom Bates, social worker for Alameda County, and the first female president of Service Employees International Union 535.

## **DAVID BEIER | San Francisco**

Appointed to the Commission by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in June 2014 and reappointed in January 2018. Managing director of Bay City Capital. Former senior officer of Genentech and Amgen, and counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary.

## **ASM. PHILLIP CHEN | Yorba Linda**

Appointed to the Commission by Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon in October 2021. Elected in November 2016 to represent 55<sup>th</sup> District. Represents portions of Los Angeles, Orange and San Bernardino counties and the cities of Brea, Chino Hills, Diamond Bar, La Habra, Industry, Placentia, Rowland Heights, Walnut, West Covina and Yorba Linda.

## **GIL GARCETTI | Los Angeles**

Appointed to the Commission by Governor Gavin Newsom in November 2021. Professional photographer and author of ten books. Former Los Angeles County District Attorney, teaching Fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School, and president of the California Science Center Foundation's Board of Trustees.

## **JOSÉ ATILIO HERNÁNDEZ | Burbank**

Appointed by Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon in April 2023. Founder and CEO of IDEATE California, a public relations and policy management firm. Also, founder and Board Chairman of ideateLABS. Former Director for External Affairs and Community Relations for ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career.

## **JASON JOHNSON | Napa**

Appointed by Governor Newsom in June 2023. Member of the Land Trust of Napa County Board of Trustees and Horary Commander of Travis Air Force Base. Former Managing Partner at Founders Den. Founder and former CEO at August Home Inc.

## **SEN. DAVE MIN | Irvine**

Appointed to the Commission by the Senate Rules Committee in September 2021. Elected in November 2020 to represent the 37<sup>th</sup> Senate District. Represents Anaheim Hills, Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Newport Beach, Orange, Tustin, and Villa Park.

## **ASM. LIZ ORTEGA | San Leandro**

Appointed to the Commission by Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon in March 2023. Elected in November 2022 to represent the 20<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. Represents Hayward, San Leandro, most of Union City, portions of Dublin and Pleasanton, and several unincorporated communities.

## **JANNA SIDLEY | Los Angeles**

Appointed to the Commission by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in April 2016 and reappointed in February 2020. Partner at Ichor Strategies and appointed to the Board of the Los Angeles City Employee Retirement System ("LACERS"). Former general counsel at the Port of Los Angeles and city attorney at the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office.

## **SEN. SCOTT WILK | Santa Clarita**

Appointed to the Commission by the Senate Rules Committee in April 2023. Elected in November 2016 to represent the 21<sup>st</sup> Senate District. Represents communities in the Antelope, Santa Clarita, and Victor Valleys.

**Full biographies are available on the Commission's website at [www.lhc.ca.gov](http://www.lhc.ca.gov).**



**“DEMOCRACY ITSELF IS A PROCESS OF CHANGE, AND SATISFACTION AND COMPLACENCY ARE ENEMIES OF GOOD GOVERNMENT.”**

By Governor Edmund G. “Pat” Brown,  
addressing the inaugural meeting of the Little Hoover Commission,  
April 24, 1962, Sacramento, California



Milton Marks Commission on California State  
Government Organization and Economy

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