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**SPEECH TO the SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL
MONETARY POLICY, TRADE, AND TECHNOLOGY**

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I would like to start by saying that I am very proud to know Ambassador Miller. I consider him to be a beacon of light in the efforts to eradicate the accepted and endorsed rape and torture of millions of women and girls. I hope you make every effort to give him all the support, tools and resources he needs. He is an absolute champion for those women and girls who are exploited, abused and forced into sexual slavery.

My name is Norma Hotaling and I am the Executive Director and Founder of the SAGE Project. SAGE is the nations first and foremost organization providing highly innovative and effective consumer driven trauma, mental health and substance abuse services for survivors of prostitution, exploitation and trafficking, including a residential services for sexually exploited girls ages 11-17. SAGE has received the Innovations in American Government Award, Peter F. Drucker Award, and Oprah's Angel Award. We are currently in formal replication processes with 12 additional cities through a project of Senator Dianne Feinstein and OJJDP. SAGE is a founding member of the Survivor Services Education and Empowerment Network.

- 1) Because our programs are designed and delivered by survivors, we effectively provide support and engender trust without re-traumatizing even the most fragile of clients. Each week we serve and heal over 350 women and girls, most of whom are life long victims of sexual, emotional and physical abuse, domestic trafficking and have suffered the humiliation of arrest after arrest. SAGE is one of the leading organizations in the Bay Area Anti-Trafficking Coalition, which is comprised of public and private organizations, social service providers, the U.S. Attorneys Office, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, the Department of Labor, and local police departments. Within the last year, SAGE has rescued 22 internationally trafficked women from the grasp of their traffickers. Nine of the women have been granted continued presence and three have been granted T-Visas and are taking legal action against their traffickers.
- 2) SAGE, in coordination with the San Francisco District Attorney's Office and Police Department, developed the nation's first and largest restorative justice program that addresses the demand side, the customers of prostitutes. Over 7000 men have attended this program after being arrested. They pay a fee, and that fee funds a wide array of rehabilitative services for the real victims of the sexual slavery: women and children.
- 3) SAGE is a dynamic departure from the previous practice of revolving door arrests of individuals involved in prostitution with little or no services available. The former approach resulted in extremely high recidivism rates (80% of individuals arrested are repeat offenders), continuing sexual exploitation and violence, and

enormous costs to the criminal justice and public health systems. Because the average age of entry into prostitution is 13-14, the issue is not only one of violence, but also of sexual abuse and rape of children.

Everyday in densely populated, urban areas vulnerable and naïve girls ages 12-17 are brutally and cunningly recruited by violent or smooth talking pimps from local high schools, streets and shopping malls and delivered to major cities all through the U.S. Poor and vulnerable Asian, South and Central American and Russian women and girls are smuggled, kidnapped, raped, tricked and coerced by traffickers and organized crime syndicates into the highly invisible and mobile sex trade that includes strip clubs, escort, massage parlors, brothels and street prostitution. These women and children make up the *Supply Side of Prostitution*. *The Demand Side of Prostitution* is comprised mostly of educated, middle and upper class men.

In prostitution we witness the fragility of the human mind. We see it brutally manipulated and molded to serve the purposes of perpetrators. Universally we experience the victims being targeted, blamed and punished by social, mental health, medical and criminal justice systems.

Vanessa who came to us at eighteen said “My pimp knocked me out with a baseball bat. I woke up and he was sewing my head up. He wouldn’t even take me to the hospital. How could I get away? He’d kill me first, besides he was all I knew. I had been with him since I was 12.”

Through SAGE we shed light on a subject that thrives in darkness, secrecy, silence and shame.

SAGE raises community awareness regarding international and domestic trafficking in addition to providing direct service to the victims of human trafficking. But combating trafficking on a street level requires coordination between law enforcement, legislators, the judiciary and community based organizations.

We have found that, unlike domestic trafficking victims, international trafficking victims are less likely to be found in jails or involved in street prostitution. They are found in the quasi-legal, US government licensed and tolerated prostitution systems commonly known as massage parlors. We have therefore been involved in significant prostitution abatement and legislative reform efforts, aimed at massage parlor licensing, as well as nail salons and acupuncture clinics.

These types of businesses have proven to be destinations for individuals who have come to this country under promissory arrangements, in which women and girls are forced to “work off” their debt.

The trend we have observed is that arrestees, who are being solicited out of private residences, are immediately relocated out once arrested. This indicates that there is third party oversight of these women’s activities, and that resources (which pay for plane

tickets and relocation costs) are directed towards keeping them working in the sex industry.

We have heard stories told and re-told about how the billions of dollars made from the sexual exploitation and enslavement of trafficked women and girls enriches transnational criminal networks. The corruption of officials through bribes and the collaboration of criminal networks with government officials enable traffickers to operate, but what is historic, heroic and happening right now is that we have awakened to the fact that these networks are financed one dollar at a time by men, ***the DEMAND***, who we have allowed to buy human beings and use them as though they are nothing more than receptacles, like toilets or sewers. We have normalized their behaviors while criminalizing the real victims. I can tell you story after story where there were no bribes of officials. These are the stories that involve the demand, the men, they are always free to go, released without ever paying a bribe, without arrest, to enjoy their dinners, families, and their jobs while continuing to pretend that their hands are clean and the millions of wounded, missing and dead women and children are a result of other very bad, very organized people doing very bad deeds. Today, with your efforts, and the introduction of the End Demand for Sex Trafficking Act of 2005, ***this protection and collusion with the real perpetrator is ending.***

Dollar by dollar, the influence of criminal networks deepens; the corruption goes as far as to block legislation that would hinder the groups' activities. Dollar by dollar paid by the demand, law enforcement personnel and government officials become more corrupt and criminals gain more influence, the line between the state and the criminal networks starts to blur, making it seem impossible to intervene in the succession of corruption, collaboration, crime, and profit. As long as we point the finger away from ourselves, away from the institutions that blame and criminalize women and children for their own rape, sexual abuse, trafficking and slavery, away from the men who we normalize as "Johns," and as long as we disconnect adult prostitution and the exploitation of children and disconnect prostitution and trafficking in human beings for the purposes of rape and sex slavery; then we are to blame and we have assisted in creating well funded transnational criminal networks-dollar by dollar.

Dollar by dollar, the money men pay to buy, have delivered, harm and toss aside women and children is laundered through bank accounts of criminal bosses in financial centers, such as the United States and Western Europe or in offshore accounts. We like to fool ourselves into thinking that domestic and international trafficking is driven by economic despair, and not by our protection and collusion with the men who demand to buy human beings and thus create the market for sex slaves. Individuals that have been trafficked within and to our country should be offered the same benefits as political prisoners. These people are truly the "huddled masses" that are spoken of at the foot of the Statue of Liberty. I feel that it is not only my job, and my civic duty as an American citizen but truly the reason I was spared death. Like most of SAGE's clients I was exploited as a child through prostitution, I suffered years of trauma, drug use, criminalization and involvement as an adult in the sex trade. It is my job, duty and purpose to prevent sexual slavery, end the demand for prostitution and sex slavery while providing women and

girls, like my self and so many of the staff of SAGE, so dreadfully harmed with hope, freedom, and the opportunity to lead a safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Thank you for the chance to speak to you today. With your continued assistance and the recommendations that are forthcoming from this committee, we can put an end to the sexual exploitation and slavery of millions of women and girls in and outside of our borders.