

Deputation on Data

I am a Free-them representative. Thank you kindly to the executive committee for meeting with us today. I will be addressing the issue of data.

In order to know how to fight the crime, we have to get a clear idea of how the crime is infesting our city. HT is a multi billion dollar industry, however, it's challenging to collect data on this issue, due to its underground nature. Victims are often reluctant to report the crime, and when they do there are challenges in clearly identifying them.

There is no need to try and reinvent the wheel, so I will be referencing the key components of Statistics Canada's study regarding data on HT.

In order for data to be effective, it needs to be apples to apples. The problem is, NGO's and front line workers define HT in so many different ways. So any data collected from them is non-comparable municipally, provincially, and federally.

A clear definition of what HT is and includes, is the first thing to ensure accurate data. One definition that is used through stats Canada. Men, women, children can be bought, sold and forced to provide labour and services in the commercial sex trade, sweatshops, agriculture, domestic service, and other types of servitude, as well as forced to sell organs. For the purpose of this discussion, a child is considered any person under the age of 18.

There also needs to be a very clear distinction between HT and human smuggling. However, it should not be forgotten that the vulnerability of a smuggled person could quickly lead to cases in HT.

To collect data, a survey must be conducted on persons IDENTIFIED AND CONFIRMED by authorities as trafficked victims, with an assurance of complete anonymity for all victims and their family.

Surveys must include details such as:

Type of exploitation, international vs. domestic incidents, number of victims per incident, number of persons accused of Ht, number of prosecutions, number of convictions, profits generated by the trafficker, citizenship of victims, and citizenship of accused. This type of detailed data will go a long way to determine the origin of the crime, and even things like the cost to the city per crime committed.

Victims may come in contact with various officials, from police, to immigration officers. There will need to be a way to ensure that **double counting** victim surveys does not occur. Because the victim does come in contact with so many people post crime, there is a clear need to educate judges, lawyers, prosecutors, police, immigration officers, and border control on HT. Due to The physical nature of the crime, many victims will be seeing doctors and nurses and various Medical personnel, and thus these professionals should not be overlooked in the training process.

In order to track the root of the problem, the city of Toronto has to be proactive to create reliable data, by looking at indicators and trends. By this I mean, how does the local sex industry contribute to HT both internationally and domestically, and how is the demand for cheap labour tied into HT. How will large scale sporting events contribute to HT. How will trends in hours of operations for businesses in the city lend to HT. For example, how does the municipal licensing and standards board, view strip clubs vs. massage parlours. If message parlours are not selling sex, why are they open till 3am? The city of Toronto must also consider and review the connections to missing woman, missing children, and incidents of child pornography, as they are indirect indicators to HT both domestic and international. After all, Canada is a leading source country for sex tourists.

We all know how important a roll data plays in this issue, but without proper education, the correct data will not be ascertained. Data isn't a federal issue, not when 62.5% of cases of HT before the courts in Canada, came out of the GTA alone. Toronto needs to take action, and not wait for other cities to try and test methods. It needs to lead, not follow. It needs to think creatively and out of the box to act on initiatives that will make this amazing city.... a slave free one.