

Joy Smith, M.P.
Kildonan – St. Paul



Statement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exemplary Police Leadership in Operation Northern Spotlight

February 4, 2014, 2014 (**OTTAWA, ON**) – Today, Joy Smith, Member of Parliament for Kildonan – St. Paul, released the following statement congratulating the twenty-six police departments involved in ‘Operation Northern Spotlight’:

“I personally thank and commend each of the 180 officers and support personnel involved in executing ‘Operation Northern Spotlight’, a two-day blitz on Jan. 22 and 23, 2014, involving police forces in thirty-two cities from Alberta to Nova Scotia,” said MP Joy Smith. “Because of these efforts, underage girls were rescued, some as young as 15-years old, and are no longer being forced to perform sex acts multiple times a day, for paying male customers.”

“This Operation is an example of an effective approach to identify and rescue victims from sexual exploitation,” added MP Smith. “Over 330 females were interviewed and offered support. There were 28 charges laid in total against human traffickers and eight arrests were made.”

“With this in mind, law enforcement across Canada must continue to use the tools available to them. The statement made last week by the Hon. Peter Mackay, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, re-affirmed this position:

“While the administration of justice is a matter of provincial jurisdiction, Canadians expect criminal laws in this country to be properly enforced so long as they remain in force. The Supreme Court of Canada made very clear in its decision that the current laws with respect to prostitution were to remain in force for twelve months. This gives Parliament the chance to respond.

“Our Government believes that prostitution is harmful to vulnerable individuals, particularly women. We are currently reviewing a range of options to address the harms that flow from prostitution to communities. But make no mistake: doing nothing is not an option. Our Government will be taking action to maintain the safety of our streets and communities.”

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Background on Northern Spotlight

Operation Northern Spotlight - January 22 & 23, 2014

Officers and/or Support Personnel Involved = 180
Total number of Police Services/Departments Involved = 26
Towns and Cities Involved = 32
Total numbers of females interviewed and offered support = 333
Youngest female interviewed = 15 years
Suspected Human Traffickers identified = 25
Arrests = 8
Charges = 28

The 26 police services participating were:

Ontario

Barrie PS; Brockville PS; Cornwall PS; Durham Regional PS; Halton Regional PS; Kingston PS; London PS; Niagara Regional PS; Ontario Provincial Police; Ottawa PS; Peel Regional PS; RCMP; Greater Sudbury PS; Thunder Bay PS; Waterloo Regional PS; Windsor PS; York Regional PS.

Western Canada

Calgary PS Alta; Edmonton PS Alta; Regina PS Sask; Saskatoon PS Sask; Winnipeg PS Man.

Eastern Canada

Gatineau PS, Que; Halifax Regional PS, NS; Saint John's RNC, NFLD; Saint John PS, NB.

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