

## Our Mission

Friday, 21 September 2007

The Nevada Coalition Against Sex Trafficking (NCAST) is a non-governmental, nonprofit organization. NCAST's mission includes educating Nevadans and other concerned citizens about the harms of prostitution, including the underlying and fundamental human rights violations of prostitution, the link between prostitution (both legal and illegal) and human trafficking, and developing and promoting policy and functional alternatives to current laws and practices within the State of Nevada.

NCAST will build a diverse coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to achieving progressive reform of Nevada's laws on prostitution and trafficking. NCAST will also establish an education and assistance program for women leaving the sex trade. We will collaborate with survivors of prostitution to determine what programs currently exist and then evaluate those programs to determine gaps in service. Once the gaps have been identified, we will work collaboratively with our partners to develop innovative solutions that would assist women in transitioning out of the sex industry and also discourage others from entering prostitution.

Addressing men's demand for prostitution is also critical. We seek to reduce the demand for sexual exploitation by developing educational programs and campaigns aimed at men and boys and by supporting the enforcement of existing laws against solicitation.

The work of NCAST will be a multi-year project. We hope to establish some best practices to dealing with these egregious forms of sexual exploitation that can be replicated elsewhere.

Candice Trummell serves as the executive director of NCAST. Trummell is the former chairman of the Nye County Commission. We welcome members and partners committed to the mission of NCAST. Please contact us at [web@nevadacoalition.org](mailto:web@nevadacoalition.org). Our first event will take place later this year. Time and location are to be announced.

Here is a snapshot of our action plan in Nevada:

- \* Build a strong coalition of survivors, organizations with similar goals and interests in the areas of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, and leaders from Nevada (political, community, church, business, and labor).

NCAST will identify and recruit members from all spectrums who are dedicated to our organization's mission and values. Survivors will be an integral component of the leadership of our organization.

- \* Seek enforcement of existing laws on prostitution and trafficking, especially with respect to arresting men who buy women and children for sex.

NCAST will initially seek enforcement of existing laws related to pimps and johns. This is not a solution to the problems in Nevada as the laws themselves need to be reformed. However, as we work through the political and legal reform movement, this step will serve to help raise the awareness of individuals and leaders regarding the prevalence of prostitution and sex trafficking in Nevada and will start helping hold the perpetrators of these crimes against women accountable.

- \* Advocate for political reform that replaces Nevada's legalized prostitution laws with progressive laws such as those in Sweden that address men's demand.

NCAST has learned via research and via the experience of other countries that the problem of prostitution and sex trafficking is best addressed not through legalization or decriminalization but through establishing and vigorously enforcing laws that hold perpetrators - johns and pimps - accountable with felony-level charges while at the same time provide safe housing and long term services for the victims. Prostitution and others who benefit from sex trafficking in Nevada are well entrenched in the political system. Many of the local citizenry have been programmed to believe that prostitution is a victimless crime. Achieving reform in Nevada will be a major campaign against much better funded and sometimes dangerous opponents.

- \* Educate women and youth alternatives to prostitution and assist them in transitioning out of prostitution.

NCAST will work with survivors, service providers and other partners to develop an education and assistance program for women and youth in prostitution. Those involved in this industry will have a wide range of needs that must be met in order for them to escape this life including, but not limited to the following types of services:

- \* Basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter
- \* Health services such as drug and alcohol addiction treatment, psychological counseling, treatment of violence-and-trauma-related injuries
- \* Job training and placement

- \* Educate the general public on the harms of prostitution and trafficking

By and large, the citizens of the State of Nevada see prostitution as either a victimless crime or a legitimate industry in which women are paid and treated well and brothel owners give back to the communities. One tenth of one percent (0.1%) is an extremely conservative estimate of the number of citizens who know what women and girls in prostitution, even in legal brothels, endure. Educating the Nevada public in a way that makes them care about those in prostitution will be a challenging process.

- \* Work in collaboration with survivors of prostitution to develop educational and outreach programs for women considering entering the business of sexual exploitation.

- \* Develop a campaign to end men's demand for prostitution.

There are a number of campaigns that confront men's demand for prostitution as the driver of the sex industry. We will explore the use of educational and legal approaches.

- \* Educate the general public and key policy makers on the link between prostitution and trafficking.

Currently, the general public and key policy makers seem willing to take on the challenge of human trafficking. In order to successfully reform Nevada's legal system, we will need to educate Nevadans on the inextricable links between prostitution and human trafficking.