



OPERATION UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

December 7, 2018

Dear Honorable Legislators,

I have spent over a decade working as a Special Agent for the Department of Homeland Security where I was assigned to the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and deployed as an undercover operative for the U.S. Child Sex Tourism Jump Team. I have trained hundreds of law enforcement officers and have testified before the United States Congress on best practices to liberate children from sex slavery.

In 2013 I founded an organization called Operation Underground Railroad (O.U.R.) whose mission is to rescue children from sex trafficking. In the last four years O.U.R. has partnered with law enforcement in 16 countries, and 13 states, rescuing 1,682 victims and assisting in the arrests of more than 848 traffickers. We embrace every opportunity for collaboration, because the fastest growing criminal enterprise in the world cannot be stopped without it. There are more people enslaved today than ever before in the history of the world. Most disturbing, is that two million of them are child sex slaves!

What kind of demand justifies the sexual enslavement of two million kids? The answer to this question is not popular, but we can't stop trafficking until we recognize and address it.

I've interrogated dozens of pedophiles over the 16 years I've worked in this field, and their story is the same. When I ask how they ended up in this situation they tell me about their first exposure to pornography and how they gradually got into more hardcore material. When the internet came along they could see anything with just the click of a mouse. Soon the material they had previously watched wasn't giving them the same high, so they started searching for pornography with younger and younger victims. Eventually even child rape videos didn't give them their fix, so they sought out victims in person.

Pornography is driving the demand for child sex trafficking. What's more, citizens of the United States are right at the heart of it. We are leading the world in the production and consumption of child pornography. Our clicks are responsible for the enslavement of those two million children! So what are we going to do about it?

I urge you to recognize the harms pornography is causing our world by passing the resolution declaring it a public health crisis. That acknowledgement will be the common ground we can stand on to educate, raise awareness, and make proactive policy changes. Please vote to protect the young lives that are depending on you.

Sincerely,

Tim Ballard
CEO Operation Underground Railroad
www.ourrescue.org