



# NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

## FROM THE DESK OF CONGRESSMAN TED YOHO

Friends,

I am encouraged by the most recent push by the House of Representatives to combat this modern day slavery called human trafficking. While the House passed a dozen bills aimed at stopping trafficking, I am disappointed in the Senate's latest actions to stop these from becoming law. There is no room for politics when it comes to trafficking and I implore the Senate to move forward on these pieces of legislation.

However, we cannot rely solely on legislative efforts in Washington. We must all do our part to ensure that our communities are aware of this issue, and are provided with the tools to do something about it.

For law enforcement, that means having the training and tools available to investigate and prosecute these cases. For non-profits and healthcare providers, it means having the resources readily available to ensure a victim centered approach is taken on the path to recovery.

I urge anyone who has a desire to stop trafficking to attend our summer summit on June 5<sup>th</sup> at Santa Fe College in Gainesville, FL. This is an opportunity for our existing membership to meet with new stakeholders to share ideas, best practices and to learn about from federal agencies about upcoming projects.

If you are interested in participating in this summer's summit or becoming a member of the North Central Florida Human Trafficking Task Force, please visit: [www.yoho.house.gov](http://www.yoho.house.gov).

Thank you,

Ted S. Yoho, DVM  
Member of Congress  
Proudly Serving Florida's 3<sup>rd</sup> District

## NEWS

- House of Representatives passes 12 new laws to combat trafficking
- Sheriff Hunter suspects active human trafficking group in Columbia County

*See more on page 2*

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Monique Burr Foundation

*Preventing bullying, cyberbullying, digital abuse, and child exploitation through internet safety programs.*

*[See more on page 2.](#)*

## EVENTS

### North Central Florida Human Trafficking Task Force Summer Summit

**June 5, 2015**  
**Santa Fe College**  
**Gainesville, FL**

# NEWS

**News from the Hill** - The House of Representatives kicked off the beginning of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress by passing 12 new pieces of legislation aimed at combatting human trafficking. The bi-partisan bills attacked the various angles of the issue by supporting a victim centered approach, curbing demand by increasing penalties, and developing awareness. Currently, the Senate is considering these bills.

**Human Trafficking Group Suspected in Columbia County** - Sheriff Mark Hunter confirmed the apprehension of two suspects in an on-going rape and kidnapping case on Tuesday, March 10. The Columbia County Sheriff's Office said Tuesday the attack on the unidentified victim has led to evidence of a human-trafficking group in the county, but no other cases or details were released. Sheriff Mark Hunter said there are possibly multiple victims involved, but the investigation is ongoing. Among the difficulties faced by investigators is a reluctance of victims to come forward for various reasons, including their fears of getting in trouble. Hunter described the attack on the woman and other human trafficking-related offenses as horrific. The Sheriff's Office got involved after a motorist called deputies Saturday morning to report being flagged down by the victim, who said she'd been kidnapped, beaten and raped. The victim, suffering from pain to her head and neck from being beaten, was taken to a hospital for treatment. Investigators had been searching for the victim since March 5 after her sister and boyfriend reported her missing, authorities said. The victim told investigators that while helping her friend, she was abducted by three men and taken to a nearby home. She said she was beaten and repeatedly raped over two days before she was able to escape Saturday. A Sheriff's Office report said she was able to run from the home where she had been restrained. The arrest report ended with the statement that "there are multiple cases and charges pending," but gave no further details. (Courtesy of Jacksonville.com)

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



### MONIQUE BURR FOUNDATION

Human trafficking, especially domestic minor sex trafficking, is preventable. Educating and empowering young students and their parents may later help boys and girls stand up to traffickers' grooming tactics. The Monique Burr Foundation for Children believes prevention is effective and is working to protect children. Congressman Yoho is proud to stand with them in their efforts.

The Foundation is dedicated to protecting children from all types of maltreatment and exploitation by providing MBF Child Safety Matters™. This comprehensive, research-based, primary prevention program educates and empowers Kindergarten through 6th grade students and all relevant adults with information and strategies to prevent bullying, cyberbullying, digital abuse, and all types of child abuse and exploitation.

The program is based on the latest research and best practices, is practical for schools to implement, and is supported by a wide variety of both education and prevention experts. MBF Child Safety Matters is available at no cost to Florida public elementary schools, and at a low cost if you live outside Florida.

For more information visit [www.mbfchildsafetymatters.org](http://www.mbfchildsafetymatters.org), email [MBF@mbfchildsafetymatters.org](mailto:MBF@mbfchildsafetymatters.org), or call 904-642-0210.