

NOW-NYC's Campaign:

Ending the Business of Human Trafficking in New York City

Key Campaign Actions January-June 2007

NOW-NYC launches a critical campaign: Ending the Business of Human Trafficking in New York City. NOW-NYC is combating this pervasive problem by raising community awareness of human trafficking throughout New York; working to get a New York law criminalizing trafficking passed; educating local businesses about their role in this illegal industry and working with local and state agencies to make trafficking a top priority in New York City.

NOW-NYC President Sonia Ossorio meets with Mayor Bloomberg and Deputy Mayor Carol Robles-Roman to build a case for making trafficking a priority issue. Later that month, Bloomberg forms the Mayor's Human Trafficking Task Force, comprised of law enforcement, criminal justice coordinators, state and federal prosecutors and service providers.

NOW-NYC helps launch weekly Albany Watch Rallies to keep the issue of human trafficking front and center. Elected officials stand alongside activists, vowing to protest until human trafficking is recognized as a crime in New York State and a strong law is passed that allows for jail time for traffickers and services for victims.

NOW-NYC launches a series of Public Education Forums on trafficking throughout NYC. Held at Brooklyn Law School, a panel discussion and screening of Frontline's "Sex Slaves" draws a standing-room only crowd filled with lawmakers, students, and activists. World Journal, the largest Chinese Newspaper in North America attends.

The New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition, of which NOW-NYC is a principal organizer, expands its advisory board to include Governor Mario Cuomo, Gloria Steinem, Meryl Streep and Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney. The mission of NOW-NYC and the Coalition is to conceptualize and push for comprehensive and effective new legislation.

News coverage generated by our press campaign, Human Trafficking: An International Problem In Our Neighborhoods, is widespread. NOW-NYC does interviews on trafficking with World Journal, Sing Tao, Hoy, AM NewYork, RNN, NY1, MNN, Telemundo, Univision, and Voice of America.

NOW-NYC launches its Trafficking Action Team, a network of activists concerned about the issue of trafficking and its affect on their community. Branching out to the five boroughs,

activists collect information through print publications and online on illegal massage parlors and spas, often used as fronts for human trafficking rings.

President Sonia Ossorio meets with NYC Police Commissioner Ray Kelly about efforts by the NYPD to identify victims and arrest traffickers and lays out field research that identifies human trafficking as a serious crime in New York City.

NOW-NYC engages in many one-on-one meetings with elected officials to educate them on trafficking and get commitments for support of a strong human trafficking bill. NOW-NYC President Sonia Ossorio and coalition members meet with members of Governor Spitzer's executive team securing support for anti-trafficking legislation.

The "Trafficking Free NYC!" good business pledge is sent to local publications throughout the five boroughs. It rewards publications that have made a policy to not advertise brothels and it asks New York newspapers, magazines and vendors to recognize the role they play as a potential marketer for the trafficking industry and publicly commit to being "trafficking free" by 2010.

Highlighting the ways traffickers exploit lax advertising rules in NYC papers, NOW-NYC co-sponsors a public forum with NOW-NYU. A third public forum is co-hosted by the National Council of Jewish Women in April of 2007.

NOW-NYC meets with women's groups to ask them to make trafficking an agenda issue. To date locally the Junior League, League of Women Voters, AAUW, Women's City Club and the New York Women's Agenda have lobbied, held forums, distributed materials to leadership, joined in rallies and/or written about trafficking in their newsletters.

NOW-NYC's Tracking Traffickers: Block By Block Campaign investigates tips about brothels being supplied by traffickers with trafficked women locally. Fielding leads to the District Attorney's office, NOW-NYC's Trafficking Action Team takes a direct stand against human trafficking.

NOW-NYC's campaign, in conjunction with the New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition, is successful in attaining a New York State law that criminalizes human trafficking and provides necessary services for victims. President Sonia Ossorio is interviewed by NY1.

NOW-NYC's Campaign: *Ending the Business of Human Trafficking in New York City*, is an initiative dedicated to raising awareness of the pervasiveness of human trafficking throughout New York State, advocating for exploited victims by addressing the need for comprehensive and effective legislation, and working in collaboration with city, state, and federal officials, and non-governmental organizations in a coordinated effort to combat trafficking in New York City and State.