

The New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition

Coalition Against Trafficking in Women ♦ Equality Now ♦ GEMS ♦ inMotion
My Sisters' Place ♦ National Organization for Women–NYC ♦ Sanctuary For Families

MEDIA ADVISORY

MAY 09, 2007

GLORIA STEINEM IN ALBANY TO URGE LEGISLATURE AND SPITZER ADMINISTRATION TO PASS ANTI-TRAFFICKING LAW IN 2007

WITH ONLY FIVE WEEKS REMAINING IN THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION PRESSURE MOUNTS ON NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATORS TO ACT FAST

What: The New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition will be joined by renowned feminist activist and author Gloria Steinem at a Press Conference in Albany to caution the New York legislature about the urgent need for swift action related to the passage of anti-trafficking legislation in the state. While the 2007 legislative session is rapidly edging toward its end, much action is yet to be taken related to criminalizing trafficking in New York. The Coalition is urging Governor Spitzer, Assembly Speaker Silver and Senate Leader Bruno to make passage of anti-trafficking legislation a top priority in the coming weeks and ensure that traffickers are effectively prosecuted and that trafficking victims can find safety and protection in New York. Victims cannot wait another year and grave violations involving human trafficking must not go unpunished by the state for another year.

When: 1:00 pm on Tuesday May 15, 2007

Where: Room 130, Legislative Office Building (LOB), Albany, NY

Who: Gloria Steinem (Feminist author and activist)
Sonia Ossorio (President, National Organization for Women NYC)
Taina Bien-Aimé (Executive Director, Equality Now)
Ruchira Gupta (Executive Director, Apne Aap)

Although New York is a prominent United States port of entry, transit and destination for trafficking victims, it is not one of the twenty nine states in the country that has passed a law against human trafficking. The continued absence of an anti-trafficking law in New York signals a conspicuous failure on the part of the state. The New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition has campaigned for a strong anti-trafficking law for the last three years. In the 2006 legislative session the New York State Assembly and Senate both passed weak bills that were inadequate responses to the crime of human trafficking. Neither bill was enacted into law. In 2007, the Senate passed a weak bill proposed by Senator Padavan and we are yet to witness any movement in the Assembly. Assemblyman Dinowitz' bill has languished in the Codes Committee since January 19, 2007. While the New York District Attorneys have consulted with the Coalition on their draft bill, it is yet to be sponsored and voted on.

Currently the Coalition consists of 80 diverse organizations from across the state. On May 15, 2007 the Coalition will sponsor the Albany screening of "Trade" a film on trafficking featuring Kevin Kline. The Coalition has relentlessly organized weekly rallies called "Albany Watch" every Thursday since January 11, 2007 in New York City. The 16 rallies that have been organized so far have raised awareness and put pressure on legislators in Albany.

The New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition is a group of leading New York-based organizations that have joined forces to advocate for a strong New York State law to hold traffickers accountable and help victims rebuild their lives. The Advisory Council, chaired by Gloria Steinem, includes Mario Cuomo, Meryl Streep, Linda Fairstein, Eve Ensler, Karenna Gore Schiff, and NYC Deputy Mayor Carol Robles among its members. For more information log on to www.stophumantraffickingny.org