

# Press Releases - Congressman Don Young

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**Washington, D.C.** – Today, **Alaska Congressman Don Young** announced that the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has awarded \$1 million to fight human trafficking in Alaska. Grants of \$500,000 from the Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Human Trafficking program will go to Covenant House Alaska and the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC).

“Tragically, the scourge of human trafficking exists in Alaska, but I am grateful for the countless organizations and advocates who help victims of all ages return to safe and productive lives with dignity. Over the years, I have been proud to partner with Covenant House Alaska and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation in their vital endeavors to serve the people of our state, including their efforts to provide compassionate care for homeless youth and survivors of human and sex trafficking,” **said Congressman Don Young**. “There is much work to do in the fight against child exploitation, but I know this funding will go a long way toward helping these two great organizations protect some of our state’s most vulnerable populations. I am grateful to the Department of Justice for making this funding available to Covenant House Alaska and The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. We can never fully repay these advocates for the necessary work they do every day, but I will continue fighting in Congress to ensure that our nation’s vulnerable are protected from human trafficking, sexual abuse, and exploitation.”

“This funding from the Department of Justice is important news for Covenant House Alaska as we continue working to help victims of sex trafficking,” **said Alison E. Kear, Chief Executive Officer of Covenant House Alaska**. “One of our highest priorities is to ensure that Alaska’s children are free from sexual, emotional, or physical abuse. We have assembled a great team that is fired up and ready to tackle this head-on; now is the time for us to match resources with efforts. This grant will help us continue our work well into the future, and we are grateful to the Department of Justice for making these crucial investments. We are not alone in this fight, and are proud of our entire Alaska Delegation for fighting on our behalf for these resources and making our grant applications competitive. We look forward to continuing our work to ensure that Alaska’s children are safe, protected, and empowered to reach their full potential.”

“When people become victims of sex trafficking, it is truly reprehensible. The risk of becoming a victim is highest for women. They deserve our attention and assistance. Our promise is that we’ll do our utmost to lend support to exploited women, men and children.

We're grateful for the partnership with Interior Alaska Center for Nonviolent Living and My House who worked hard to make this grant announcement possible" **said AHFC CEO/Executive Director Bryan Butcher.**

**Background from the U.S. Department of Justice:**

The goal of the FY 2020 Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Human Trafficking Program is to support housing assistance for victims of all forms of human trafficking throughout the United States, as defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, as amended. Funding through this solicitation supports programs that provide 6 to 24 months of transitional housing with support services to victims of human trafficking who are in need of housing as a result of human trafficking. Funding will be provided over a three-year project period.

**Covenant House Alaska project description:**

Covenant House Alaska (CHA) will address the critical need for rapid rehousing for victims ages 18-24, provide short-term rental assistance, and access to specialized supportive services (e.g., substance abuse treatment, mental health services, legal education, job training, etc.) for victims of human trafficking ages 13-24. The goal of this project is to provide transitional housing (e.g., transitional and rapid rehousing), short-term housing assistance (e.g., rental assistance) and appropriate trauma-informed, victim-centered services that address the housing, transportation, employment, and service needs of victims of human trafficking and lead to their increased autonomy, self-sufficiency, increased safety and well-being.

**Alaska Housing Finance Corporation project description:**

Under this project, the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's (AHFC) SAFE-T Program will develop a response to human trafficking in Alaska. AHFC will provide match funding and additional housing assistance support to Interior Alaska Center for Nonviolent Living (IAC) in Fairbanks and Mat-Su Youth Housing (MYH) in Wasilla for pilot programs serving adult and youth victims of human trafficking in Alaska. These programs will serve 40 clients annually for three years and provide 40 units of housing. Both communities report high incidents of missing persons, domestic violence and other key indicators that human trafficking is likely to be occurring. Implementing this project to generate performance outcomes and data will be invaluable to the future of policymaking, program development, and service partners to evaluate and address best practices for the state to combat human trafficking.

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