



# CENTRAL VALLEY FREEDOM COALITION

## Media Advisory

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### **First Ever Conference on Human Trafficking Addresses Growing Issue in Central Valley**

**(Fresno, CA)** – The new Central Valley Freedom Coalition, in partnership with Central Valley Against Human Trafficking, is hosting its Inaugural Conference on Human Trafficking – “Slavery Shall Not Exist” – this Wednesday, April 14, between 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at National University located at 20 River Park Drive West in Fresno.

“People think that human trafficking is something that happens in Los Angeles or San Francisco,” says Ronna Bright, Human Trafficking Project Coordinator with Central Valley Against Human Trafficking and Central Valley Freedom Coalition. “Truth is: human trafficking is happening in our backyard! We have active cases in Fresno, Clovis, Huron, and throughout the Central Valley.”

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) – a national, toll-free hotline that helps victims of human trafficking across the nation – received 14 incident reports of human trafficking in Fresno County during the first quarter of 2010; Fresno County ranks sixth in California as a source of calls made to NHTRC.

Conference participants will hear from local human trafficking experts and Carissa Phelps, a former human trafficking victim who is now an attorney and advocate for victims of human trafficking.

“Carissa’s story has served as an inspiration to so many, instilling hope in victims and commitment by law enforcement and service providers,” says Bright.

Members from the FBI, U.S. Attorneys Office, Fresno County District Attorney's Office, Fresno Police Department, Fresno County Sheriff Office, Crime Victim Assistance Center, California Department of Corrections-Parole, Supervisor Susan Anderson, and Cathi Huerta with Fresno County Department of Social Services will all participate in the event.

#### **About Central Valley Freedom Coalition:**

Established in 2009, Central Valley Freedom Coalition strives to bring to light the issue of human trafficking in the Central Valley through education while helping victims break away from their imprisoned lifestyles, access services, and ultimately gain independence.

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