

## NASS IDEAS Award Application – 2023 State of Iowa



**State Office:** Iowa Secretary of State Paul D. Pate

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**Title of Program:** *Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking*

**Project lead:** Christy Johnson, Deputy Secretary of State

**Description of the program:** Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery, and it takes place in every state. Because our office works with survivors of trafficking through the Safe at Home address confidentiality program, and we are the business repository for the State of Iowa, the Secretary of State's Office is in a unique position to raise awareness about human trafficking and combat this horrific crime. We are building a statewide, grassroots coalition that will unite with one common mission: To make Iowa a trafficking-free state. We can accomplish that through the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT) initiative.

**Subject area of nomination:** Business Services

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **HISTORY**

One of Secretary Pate's first goals upon returning to this office in January 2015 was to create an address confidentiality program for survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, stalking and trafficking. Safe at Home launched the next year and has grown to more than 1,200 participants. Many of those are victims of human trafficking. While the program has become very successful in helping victims become survivors, more needs to be done to raise awareness about the crimes that make Safe at Home a necessity for so many Iowans.

Beginning in April of 2021, the Secretary of State began developing a plan to address human trafficking in Iowa. Secretary Pate attended a lunch-and-learn in his hometown of Cedar Rapids. It detailed some of the horrors victims endure. There was also a story about a human trafficking attempt that was thwarted by an alert employee at the Cedar Rapids Airport. The employee had undergone a human trafficking awareness training and recognized the signs. That meeting was the genesis of the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking initiative.

Secretary Pate decided to find a way our office could address this form of modern-day slavery. He felt there needed to be a way to raise statewide awareness about this horrendous crime, and train businesses on how to recognize trafficking as it is happening.

Our office examined what other states had done and found that Texas had launched an anti-trafficking initiative in 2018, but due to legislative constraints, their success was limited. Secretary Pate decided our office could build a program internally by connecting Iowa's entire business community with resources to take up this challenge and spread awareness statewide.

The Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT) had already established a relationship with the State of Iowa. They developed training videos for hotel and motel employees on how to spot the signs of human trafficking and what to do when a suspicious situation arises. By partnering with NAHT, we had access to resources that could be communicated with every business in the state-and a willing ally who would help us take up this cause and share their expertise.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between the Secretary of State's Office and NAHT in mid-August 2021. The partnership became official and Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT) became a reality.

Our next step was developing a plan for what we expected from businesses that joined IBAT. Joining and saying you are a member is great, but we wanted to give IBAT members action steps to complete. It was determined we would ask each member to "Learn Something" and "Do Something" every year.

For the "Learn Something" component, we request business owners educate themselves and their employees about human trafficking. Flyers, videos, and other informational materials are provided to IBAT members by our office. Businesses also could schedule a human trafficking training with one of the organizations listed on our website. A variety of information is available, and IBAT members can decide which format is best suited for their needs.

For the "Do Something" component, businesses are asked to empower their employees, customers, and industry partners to help prevent human trafficking in Iowa. Suggestions include submitting an editorial to the local paper, developing a social media campaign, and volunteering at a local organization. Hosting a lunch and learn for the community, like the one Secretary Pate attended in April 2021 that spurred him to create the program, would be invaluable. These options are varied, so that the mom-and-pop stores on main street or large corporations all can take part in the program.

We soon developed a website, online application for businesses to join, informational videos, a resource portal, and much more.

The next step was outreach to Iowa's business community. Before announcing IBAT to the public, we needed to have a solid foundation of businesses and organizations already on board. Our first targets were trade organizations, such as the Iowa Association of Business and Industry, the Iowa Restaurant Association, and the Iowa Bankers Association. By having trade associations joining IBAT, they could amplify our message by encouraging their members to also take part in the program.

Each January, NAHT conducts an awards ceremony with Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds to honor those in Iowa who have made a difference in the fight against human trafficking. It was determined that this event would be a terrific opportunity to publicly announce the launch of IBAT, although the program had officially started six months earlier.

On January 13, 2022, Secretary of State Paul Pate announced the creation of a statewide alliance with Iowa's business community to end human trafficking in the state. Several of the state's largest trade organizations had already joined the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking coalition. Membership in IBAT was open to any business or nonprofit organization that operates in the State of Iowa and shares a commitment to taking steps to promote awareness of human trafficking and the Iowa Safe at Home program.

35 businesses and organizations had already joined IBAT prior to the public announcement, including:

- American Council of Engineering Companies Associated Builders and Contractors of Iowa, Inc.
- Atlantic Bottling Company
- Beeline and Blue
- Cemen Tech
- Community Bankers of Iowa
- Community Foundation for Inspired Giving
- Farrell's Extreme Bodyshaping
- Greater Des Moines Partnership
- Home Builders Association of Iowa
- Independent Insurance Agents of Iowa
- Iowa Association of Business and Industry
- Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives
- Iowa Automobile Dealers Association
- Iowa Bankers Association
- Iowa Biotechnology Association
- Iowa Business Council
- Iowa Engineering Society
- Iowa Good Roads Association
- Iowa Grocery Industry Association
- Iowa Hospital Association
- Iowa Hotel & Lodging Association
- Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery
- Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center
- Iowa Restaurant Association
- Iowa Society of Association Executives
- Iowa Water Well Association
- Iowa-Nebraska Equipment Dealers Association
- Jackson Mfg. Inc
- Live Now Consign & Designs
- Mercy College of Health Sciences
- Pate Asphalt Systems Company

- Society of Land Surveyors of Iowa
- St. Vincent de Paul
- Two Tone Creative

The immediate reaction to the announcement was overwhelmingly positive. Businesses and organizations across Iowa were eager to join. Within the first month of launching, more than 400 businesses, organizations, and associations signed up. By the end of June 2022, IBAT grew to 542 members across 78 of Iowa's 99 counties.

Every business that signs up for IBAT is provided with a window decal, social media tools and a template media release to announce their membership in the coalition. They also are mentioned across the Secretary of State's social media platforms. We provide each business with a window decal in the hopes it will encourage other businesses to join IBAT, spark conversation in their community about this horrific crime, and provide a sense of safety to those who are or have been a victim of trafficking. The resources provided by NAHT and other organizations are readily available for IBAT members to help them with the "Learn Something" and "Do Something" components.

Secretary Pate met privately with businesses across Iowa and spoke about the importance of joining IBAT to rotary clubs, chambers of commerce and other civic organizations. Using earned media, a spotlight began to show on the prevalence of human trafficking in Iowa.

In July 2022, Hy-Vee, one of the top three favorite grocery stores in the U.S., joined the IBAT coalition. Tens of thousands of people heard the message as Hy-Vee promoted IBAT during its Hy-Vee INDYCAR Race Weekend July 22-24 at the Iowa Speedway in Newton. Having Hy-Vee join our efforts to end human trafficking in Iowa was crucial. As one of the most trusted brands in America, with more than 285 locations across the Midwest, Hy-Vee could make a big impact on curtailing human trafficking in Iowa and the surrounding states. Their corporate headquarters are located in West Des Moines, Iowa.

The Iowa State Association of Counties joined the cause in July. This was another vital step, as the organization partnered with Secretary Pate for a joint letter that was sent to every Iowa county's Board of Supervisors-encouraging them to join IBAT. A sample proclamation and media release template were provided to all 99 counties to assist them in raising awareness about human trafficking.

The IBAT initiative also propelled us to work with other state agencies to counter this horrific crime. Saturday, July 30, 2022, was World Day Against Human Trafficking. That week, Secretary Pate partnered with the Iowa Department of Public Safety and the Iowa Department of Transportation to raise awareness about the issue through media interviews and social media posts. Their combined goal is to make Iowa a trafficking-free state.

In September 2022, Secretary Pate urged states around the country to adopt a program like Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking. He made the remarks during one of the keynote addresses at the National Association of Confidential Address Programs (NACAP) conference in Boulder, Colorado. Secretary Pate is a founding member of NACAP. The organization was established in 2016 and includes membership from more than 30 states.

Another major IBAT Iowa business joined the IBAT ranks in October 2022. Fareway Stores, Inc. announced it had joined the statewide coalition to end human trafficking in Iowa. Fareway is a family-owned business based in Boone, Iowa. It is a growing Midwest grocery store company, with 132 locations and more than 12,000 employees. In Iowa alone, Fareway has 110 locations and is uniquely positioned to be a vital ally in the fight to make Iowa a trafficking-free state.

IBAT had grown to more than 600 members by November 1.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery. It happens when men, women, or children are forced to perform labor services or sexual acts. Trafficking affects thousands of people across the U.S., and it can happen to anyone. It is a crime that can occur behind closed doors, in plain sight, at a workplace, and in any community. Trafficking is a growing problem across our state, nation, and world. NASS members can do something about it.

Human trafficking is a very difficult crime to accurately quantify. Trafficking is often mistaken for or tied to other crimes. In 2021, 230 incidents of child sex trafficking were reported to the Iowa Department of Human Services, with 22 of the reports substantiated. In 2020, 107 reports were received, with 13 cases substantiated. Iowa's Victim Services Programs served 642 sex trafficking victims [in 2021](#), and 145 labor trafficking victims. The Iowa Family Crisis Center Hotline took 297 calls related to sex trafficking and 50 labor trafficking calls in 2021.

Law enforcement and victims' advocate groups say these numbers are just "the tip of the iceberg". We know that one instance of human trafficking is one too many. This form of modern-day slavery must end.

If Iowa's business community comes together, we can accomplish the goal of ending human trafficking in our state. Whether it's a large corporation or a mom-and-pop store on main street with one employee, every business can join, and every business can make a difference. Something as simple as handing out a brochure or making a social media post can make a difference. It can create a ripple effect across the state.

Whether it's sex trafficking or labor trafficking, this issue affects thousands of people across the U.S., and it happens in Iowa and every other state in our nation. If the business community of every state joins the fight, the impact could reverberate around our country and across the globe. Any form of slavery is absolutely unacceptable, and human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery. It must end.

This is a crucial, low-cost initiative to address a serious issue in our country and it can be easily replicated in every state.

## **IMPACT/RESULTS**

Since the launch of IBAT in August 2021, the coalition has grown to more than 600 businesses, organizations, and associations across Iowa. We have seen human trafficking awareness signs at local festivals, businesses launching social media campaigns, companies promoting IBAT in newsletter articles, organizations hosting lunch-and-learns and much more.

Iowa's Safe at Home program has also seen an increase in participation and public awareness since the launch of IBAT. The number of organizations requesting information materials and a speaker regarding Safe at Home have also risen as a result of IBAT.

IBAT has received significant media coverage across Iowa, in every media market. A greater spotlight than ever before has shone on the plague of human trafficking in our state. Tips to the Iowa Office to Combat Human Trafficking have increased since IBAT was announced to the public.

### **Organizations and agencies that have been on the frontlines of battling human trafficking in Iowa praise the Iowa Secretary of State's involvement:**

*"We are grateful to have been invited to collaborate with the Secretary of State in the design and creation of the IBAT program. Secretary Pate is to be commended for launching IBAT and giving all of Iowa's businesses the opportunity to join the fight to end modern slavery and human trafficking in our state. It's really the first (program) of its kind in the nation. We're really proud of that. And I really commend the*

*Secretary of State (Paul Pate) for taking this on, and he's really been going throughout the state promoting this program."* - George Belitsos, chair of the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery

*"We appreciate the Secretary of State's efforts to increase awareness. Our goal is that awareness in the lodging industry and the general public leads to increased reporting. In the last two years, our department has trained and certified nearly 600 lodging properties and more than 17,500 staff to identify human trafficking. With our "See It and Report It" initiative, we've created a website that provides an anonymous reporting tool and a hotline to report suspected human trafficking. Tips received are then shared with our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners for follow-up."* - Iowa Office to Combat Human Trafficking Special Agent in Charge Chris Callaway

*"We share the common goal of combating human trafficking in Iowa. Creating awareness of the issue and helping people recognize the signs of human trafficking can make a big difference in putting a stop to it."* - Sgt. Joe Nickell from the Iowa Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Enforcement.

### **Companies are publicly joining in the fight:**

*"Fareway is proud to aid in the fight against human trafficking. By joining with the Iowa Secretary of State and nearly 600 businesses across Iowa, we can fight stronger, together."* - Fareway CEO Reynolds W. Cramer

*"With our footprint across Iowa and the Midwest, we have a large presence in the region. For years, we have trained our drivers on what to look for when it comes to the safety of our employees and the general public. The IBAT initiative provides an official program for us and other businesses to be a part of, which will only further protect our communities."* - Georgia Van Gundy, Hy-Vee's executive vice president, chief administrative officer and chief customer officer

### **Other states are following the Iowa model**

A new initiative to combat human trafficking was launched in October by [Mississippi Secretary of State Michael Watson](#) and business leaders. The Mississippi Businesses Against Trafficking, or MBAT, program will provide training to businesses and employees on how to spot the signs of human trafficking, and where to report to when they see them. 76 businesses had joined MBAT within its first few weeks.

### **What is all means**

IBAT launched in August 2021 and grew from zero members to more than 600 by December 2022. Survivors' stories now are being heard by across the state, peoples' eyes are opening to the horrors of human trafficking, and they're finding a way to fight back.

Iowans are realizing that this crime is happening across the state and it could impact someone they know and love. A greater awareness than every before is being placed on human trafficking and thousands of people have learned about it and are better equipped to do something about it.

Some of Iowa's top employers like Fareway and Hy-Vee are participating, and dozens of trade organizations are spreading the message. Media outlets are reaching hundreds of thousands of Iowans with information about what human trafficking is, how to spot it, and where to turn to for help.

We are building an army to combat human trafficking in Iowa, and that army is growing bigger and better equipped every day.

More information is available at [IBAT.iowa.gov](https://ibat.iowa.gov).

## **SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

### **Media coverage**

[Iowa Secretary of State announces new business coalition to fight human trafficking | News | kimt.com](#)

[Iowa businesses unite against human trafficking in new statewide initiative \(desmoinesregister.com\)](#)

[New business coalition launches to end human trafficking in Iowa \(kcrg.com\)](#)

[Iowa business coalition fights to stop human trafficking \(kcci.com\)](#)

[Iowa businesses help combat human trafficking in state \(who13.com\)](#)

[Coalition launched to help Iowa stop human trafficking | weareiowa.com](#)

[Iowa's secretary of state launches initiative to combat human trafficking - YouTube](#)

[Coalition launched to help Iowa stop human trafficking | wqad.com](#)

[New training program helps businesses stop human trafficking | OurQuadCities](#)

[Siouxland businesses light up "blue" to join Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking | KMEG \(siouxlandnews.com\)](#)

[Iowa's secretary of state launches initiative to combat human trafficking | wqad.com](#)

[Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking launched to combat forced labor - Radio Iowa](#)

[New statewide initiative will help businesses combat human trafficking | Iowa Public Radio](#)

[Secretary Pate Launches Statewide Coalition to End Human Trafficking in Iowa – Mix 107.3 KLOW](#)

[IOWA LAUNCHES EFFORT TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING - KSCJ 1360](#)

[Pate Launches Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking – KIWARadio.com](#)

[Iowa businesses unite against human trafficking in new statewide initiative - Iowa Capital Dispatch](#)

[Pate Launches Statewide Coalition to End Human Trafficking in Iowa | The Iowa Torch](#)

[Iowa launches statewide business alliance to end human trafficking | Iowa | thecentersquare.com](#)

[Editorial: Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down \(qconline.com\)](#)

[Iowa state officials raising awareness on human trafficking | KTVO](#)

[State agencies combat human trafficking in Iowa | weareiowa.com](#)

[Iowa leaders calling on community to help spot human trafficking \(ketv.com\)](#)

[Iowa businesses help combat human trafficking in state \(who13.com\)](#)

[Iowa Officials Trying To Raise Awareness Of Effort To Prevent Human Trafficking – KIWARadio.com](#)

[Iowa Agencies Raising Awareness About Human Trafficking | AM 600 WMT - NewsRadio \(iheart.com\)](#)

[Human trafficking affects Iowans, Nebraskans \(wowt.com\)](http://wowt.com)

[Iowa's secretary of state launches initiative to combat human trafficking | wgad.com](http://wgad.com)

[Iowa works to combat human trafficking within the state – Iowa State Daily](http://www.iowastatedaily.com)

[Effort continues to educate public on prevention of human trafficking - Radio Iowa](http://www.radioiowa.com)

[Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate Encourages Other States to Adopt Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative | River Cities' Reader \(rcreader.com\)](http://rcreader.com)

[Secretary of State talks human trafficking prevention during Rotary Club visit | News, Sports, Jobs - Times Republican](http://www.timesrepublican.com)

[New training, laws take aim at human trafficking in Iowa | The Gazette](http://www.the-gazette.com)

[Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate Hosting Talk on Human Trafficking in Indianola | KNIA KRLS Radio - The One to Count On](http://www.knia.com)

[Paul Pate speaks to Rotary about Iowans Against Trafficking | Discover Muscatine](http://www.discovermuscatine.com)

[Fareway Joins Secretary Pate's Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking in Iowa | KWBG AM1590 & 101.5 FM | Boone, Iowa | Local News Sports Weather](http://www.kwbg.com)

[Fareway Joins Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking Initiative | Raccoon Valley Radio - The One to Count On](http://www.theonetocount.com)

[Fareway joins Iowa's fight against human trafficking | News | kimt.com](http://www.kimt.com)

[Fareway joins IA Sec. of State Pate's efforts to combat human trafficking in Iowa - ABC 6 News - kaaltv.com](http://www.kaaltv.com)

[More than 500 Iowa Businesses Team Up to Combat Human Trafficking | NEWSRADIO 1040 WHO | WHO Radio News \(iheart.com\)](http://www.iheart.com)

[Chariton Area Chamber/Main Street joins statewide Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking effort | News | charitonleader.com](http://www.charitonleader.com)

[Iowa Businesses Taking Action Against Human Trafficking - Iowa City Area Business Partnership](http://www.iowacityarea.com)

[Carroll County Supervisors Approve Anti-Human Trafficking Proclamation | CBC Online - Carroll Broadcasting \(1380kcim.com\)](http://www.1380kcim.com)



Flyer



**Together, we can make Iowa  
a trafficking-free state.**

Join Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking to

**Learn Something**  
and  
**Do Something**

**Apply Today!**



Visit [IBAT.iowa.gov](http://IBAT.iowa.gov)

## **LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT?**

**Iowa Victim Service Call Center**

800-770-1650 or text "IowaHelp" to 20121

**National Human Trafficking Hotline**

888-373-7888 or text "Help" to 233733



IBAT logo/decal





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JOIN TODAY!

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**You can take  
action against  
human trafficking.**

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**I stand against  
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