



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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10324 Interstate 30 | P.O. Box 2261 | Little Rock, AR 72203-2261 | Phone: 501.569.2227

INFORMATION RELEASE

Contact:
Danny Straessle/Britni Dumas

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ARDOT Takes the Initiative to Combat Human Trafficking

LITTLE ROCK (4-24) – The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) joins a national initiative by signing the Transportation Leaders Against Human Trafficking pledge, according to agency officials.

The Department of Transportation’s initiative is comprised of transportation and travel industry stakeholders working jointly to maximize their collective impact in combating human trafficking. The partnership focuses on five key areas: leadership, education and training, policy development, public awareness and outreach, and information sharing and analysis.

ARDOT Director Scott Bennett presented the signed pledge today during the April Arkansas Highway Commission meeting. “Awareness is critical. Knowing what to look for and how to respond is essential,” Bennett said.

On May 4, 2017, the Arkansas General Assembly passed a law requiring any individual applying for a commercial driver license to complete Human Trafficking training and provide a certificate to the Department of Finance and Administration. More than 1,900 ARDOT employees have participated in the Truckers Against Trafficking training in order to receive their license.

According to the United States Department of Transportation, as many as 20 million men, women, and children are held against their will and trafficked into forced labor and prostitution. Those committing this crime are using roadways to traffic victims. Employee education and training are an important piece of the effort to stop it from happening in our State.

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Arkansas Highway Police participate in Human Trafficking training as well. Officers are required to take a three-hour course through the Criminal Justice Institute.

“Our officers in the field conduct surveillance at high-volume traffic facilities,” Arkansas Highway Police Chief Jay Thompson said. “We are committed to providing a safer environment in our State.”

ARDOT plans to train more employees in the coming year.

“ARDOT is proud to be a partner in this initiative. If we work together, we can help put an end to human trafficking,” Bennett emphasized.

Free online training is also available to the general public to help identify signs of possible human trafficking. Visit www.helpingtraffickedpersons.org for more information.

If you suspect human trafficking, report a tip at <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/report-trafficking> or call the toll-free hotline 1-888-373-7888.