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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Urges Passage of Cut Profits to the Cuban Regime Act

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody, Chair of Florida's Statewide Council on Human Trafficking, is urging congressional leaders to take action to slow human trafficking of health care workers from Cuba—many of these victims now live in Florida. Attorney General Moody today sent a letter to Florida Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott, Sen. James E. Risch of Idaho, Sen. Bob Menendez of New Jersey, Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas in strong support of the Cut Profits to the Cuban Regime Act. The CPCR Act aims to end the human trafficking of Cuban health care professionals through the country's overseas medical missions program.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "As Attorney General, one of my top priorities is ending human trafficking. While my efforts have included working with law enforcement to address forced sexual exploitation, human trafficking takes on many other forms, including forced and inhumane labor. Thousands of Cuban medical professionals are currently being sent overseas for their services with their pay going to benefit the communist Cuban government. We cannot stand idly by as this regime continues to abuse and exploit its citizens. We must act now to end this form of modern-day slavery orchestrated by the Cuban government."

To read the letter, click here.

According to the most recent U.S. Department of State's Annual Trafficking in Persons Report, Cuba remains on the highest tier of trafficking concerns. The Cuban government continues to force medical professionals to more than 60 countries through the overseas medical missions program. The participating countries send wages directly to the Cuban government, leaving the medical professionals with little to no compensation for services provided. The exploitation of Cuban medical professionals is one of the largest sources of revenue for the regime, funding the Cuban military and security, while also providing financial support for the Maduro regime in Venezuela.

It is alleged that the Cuban and Venezuelan regimes are not the only groups profiting from the trafficking of Cuban medical professionals. According to a complaint filed in a federal civil action by survivors, the Pan American Health Organization, an affiliate of the World Health Organization, collected more than $75 million from the exploitation of Cuban medical personnel working in Brazil by serving as the middleman between the Brazilian and Cuban governments. The arrangement resulted in the Cuban regime seizing 85% of the medical worker's wages and the PAHO retaining a 5% brokerage fee, leaving the doctors and nurses providing the care with 10% or less of wages earned.

If passed, the CPCR Act would provide host countries of the overseas medical missions program

an incentive to pay Cuban medical personnel wages directly, avoiding the regime further profiting from forced labor. The act would also ensure the process of sending Cuban medical professionals to countries overseas is transparent, encouraging host committees to prevent the Cuban government from using forcible and inhumane tactics as leverage over its medical professionals.