Date October 08, 2021

Attorney General Moody's Week In Review - Oct. 8, 2021

This week, we launched the virtual 2021 Human Trafficking Summit!
Every year, the Summit honors outstanding Floridians for their efforts to end human trafficking in Florida. This year is special because Floridians have rallied to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic to continue fighting this horrendous crime and help survivors heal.

In preparation for Super Bowl 55 in Tampa, we partnered with organizations, such as It's a Penalty and Tampa International Airport, to place anti-human trafficking messages throughout major travel hubs. We also teamed up with Airbnb and Uber to provide hosts and drivers in the Tampa Bay area with information about how to recognize the signs and where to report suspicious activity.

These are all just a few examples of businesses and community organizations doing their part as we aim for victory in this important fight.

In the spirit of winning, I want to thank this year's keynote speaker, Tampa Bay Buccaneer and Super Bowl Champion Chris Godwin, along with his wife Mariah, for

their dedication to our cause. The Godwins were instrumental in our efforts leading up to the big game.

With more than 15 hours of presentations by speakers from across the nation, the nearly 4,000 attendees who registered are now equipped with the knowledge and tools to spot human trafficking, save lives and rescue victims.

If you missed the launch, don’t worry, registration is still open. All the presentations are available online at humantraffickingsummit.com.

By bringing individuals together to focus on how we can eradicate human trafficking from our state, we will build a Stronger, Safer Florida.

In The News

Human Trafficking Summit spotlights all-hands-on-deck approach, Florida Politics

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Ashley Moody joins other AGs in backing Senate’s social media hearings, Florida Politics

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Vero Beach pool contractors arrested, accused of money laundering, WESH Orlando

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K9s For Warriors receives ‘Back the Blue’ award, donates Station Dog to JSO, WJXT Jacksonville

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Protecting Floridians

Attorney General Moody Expresses Strong Support of Congressional Hearings Addressing Youth Social Media Use

Attorney General Ashley Moody and a bipartisan coalition of 52 attorneys general expressed strong support for the hearings being conducted by the U.S. Senate Committee addressing the protection and safety of kids and teens using social media. Attorney General Moody is concerned about the long-term impacts of social media on youth. Those concerns have grown with the recent research from Facebook's own internal studies showing that social media is inflicting harm—in the form of increased mental distress, bullying, suicide and other self-harm—on a significant number of kids. Attorney General Moody signed on to the National Association of Attorneys General letter urging the committee to be thorough in its proceedings and to make clear how social media companies use children's and adolescents' data.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "As a mother of a middle schooler, I don't want social media companies targeting my son—enticing him to spend more time online; and, as Attorney General, I have serious concerns about the tactics and strategies Facebook is using to increase the length of time children and adolescents spend engaging with the platform. Inquiries like these Congressional hearings should provide the public with a better understanding of how and why our youth are being targeted by Big Tech." Read More

CONSUMER ALERT: Robocalls on the Rise in 2021

Attorney General Ashley Moody issued a Consumer Alert highlighting a staggering increase in the number of robocalls flooding Floridians' phones. According to the Robocall Index, so far in 2021, robocalls have increased by nearly 450 million calls, or 16% when compared to the same time period last year. The Federal Communications Commission cites robocalls as the agency's top consumer complaint. Attorney General Moody is working with attorneys general from across the country in a coordinated effort to fight back against illegal robocalls to protect Floridians from scams connected to calls.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The pandemic changed the way we work, learn and socialize—further popularizing the tools we use to communicate remotely, including cellphones. With this rise in cellphone use, it is no surprise that we are seeing an increase in the number of robocalls targeting Floridians. Please remain vigilant when receiving calls from unknown sources and never give personal or financial information in response to an unwanted solicitation." Read More

Behavioral Health Hospital Employee Arrested for Abusing a Disabled Adult

Attorney General Ashley Moody’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, with the assistance of the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, announced the arrest of a former mental health technician for abusing a disabled adult. Shauney Rashaun Wilson allegedly physically abused and caused injury to a disabled adult while under Wilson’s care and supervision as an inpatient resident at Wekiva Springs Hospital.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “The violent behavior exhibited by this health care professional is extremely disturbing. My Medicaid Fraud Control Unit will hold this defendant accountable for his crimes against a defenseless patient entrusted to his care.” Read More

BACK THE BLUE ALERT: Attorney General Moody Praises Program Providing Law Enforcement Agencies with Service Dogs

Attorney General Ashley Moody recognized the K9s For Warriors program for its efforts in providing Florida law enforcement agencies with trained Service Dogs to help mitigate stress factors common to the work environment of dispatch operators, first responders and law enforcement officers. Founded to provide assistance to veterans, K9s For Warriors recently expanded its mission to include providing trained Service Dogs to local law enforcement agencies across Florida through the Station Dog program.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “The brave men and women of Florida law enforcement often find themselves in extremely stressful and dangerous situations. I am so thankful for the work being done by K9s For Warriors to help connect law enforcement heroes with K9s to help them heal and cope with some of the invisible wounds inflicted while protecting Floridians. I look forward to watching the Station Dog program grow and help even more members of our law enforcement community.” Read More

FDLE arrests Vero Beach business owners for scheme to defraud, money laundering

FDLE agents

arrested local pool contractors Brian and Chrystal Washburn, of Amore' Pools Inc., after a scheme to defraud homeowners by taking large deposits to build in-ground residential swimming pools, but never completing the projects. Attorney General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution will prosecute the defendants.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The defendants took thousands of dollars in upfront payments, then dug holes in customers' backyards with no intention of ever finishing the work they were paid to complete. This fraudulent pool-contracting scheme harmed dozens of Floridians and violated several state laws. We will make sure these defendants are held accountable for their criminal actions." Read More

Events

This week, Attorney General Ashley Moody presented a Back the Blue Award in Ponte Vedra to the K9s For Warriors organization and its Station Dog Program that assists in helping mitigate stress factors for dispatch officers, first responders and law enforcement officers.

To nominate a law enforcement officer, citizen or organization for the Back the Blue Award, or for more information about the Back the Blue campaign, click here.