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DOJ announces \$44M in grant funding to fight human trafficking

By Lydia Wheeler - 09/24/15 02:37 PM EDT

The Obama administration announced plans Thursday to spend \$44 million to help communities combat human trafficking.

While speaking to the Washington Advisory Committee on Trafficking in Seattle, Attorney General Loretta Lynch said \$22.7 million of the grant funding is going to 16 anti-human-trafficking task forces across the country.

Another \$13.7 million will go to service organizations to help trafficked victims, including those who identify as lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police will receive \$1 million to analyze how task forces are trained and study what technical assistance is needed to strengthen investigations and prosecutions, and the National Conference of State Legislators will receive \$477,000 to create resources including an online database of state laws, websites, webinars and briefing papers.

More than 3.5 million is set aside to expand existing research efforts and map out best practices for state, local and tribal criminal justice agencies. The remaining funds will go to three organizations that provide mentoring services for young victims and two organizations that provide victims with legal assistance.

“Human traffickers prey on some of the most vulnerable members of our society, and their crimes – which are nothing short of modern-day slavery – have no place in this country,” Lynch said in a news release.

The Office of Justice Programs’ Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime and the National Institute of Justice will administer the grants.