



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Los Angeles to Address Long-Ignored Gaps in Child Labor Trafficking Resources

Public comment scheduled for October 1, 2024

Los Angeles, CA (September 30, 2024) — The Los Angeles Board of Supervisors will hear [public comments](#) on October 1 as they adopt a five-year plan to address the egregious [gaps](#) in child labor trafficking [resources](#) based on groundbreaking research and advocacy from the Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative at Loyola Law School in collaboration with [PACT](#), DCFS, and public health leaders.

Although child labor trafficking survivors endure similar challenges as child sex trafficking victims, including physical and emotional abuse, exploitation, coercion, and long-term psychological trauma, they do not currently receive equal access to supportive services that child sex trafficking survivors in Los Angeles are eligible to receive. In 2016, California signed into law a bill that would preclude minor victims of commercial sex from being arrested and charged with prostitution. While this bill recognized the harmful effects of arresting victims, it did not address the exploitation faced by children trafficked for labor, leaving them without the support they need. Almost 10 years later, the Board of Supervisor will finally adopt a plan for Los Angeles County that will protect all child trafficking victims equally and ensure equal access to County assistance.

Child labor trafficking survivors like Jimmy Lopez testified in support at the state legislature on this issue, saying: “If the system had been trained to identify me, I would have understood what happened to me was a crime—not that I was a criminal. Also, maybe I would not have been trafficked twice and someone would have called the child welfare system and identified me”

The [Sunita Jain Initiative](#) (SJI) has worked tirelessly for years, [researching](#) data-driven outcomes and advocating for the State and County to improve [resources](#) available to child labor trafficking [survivors](#). This groundbreaking change will vastly improve the lives of children who are most vulnerable to exploitation. It will also ensure that the County understands the dynamics of child labor trafficking for forced criminality — so that no child in LA County is arrested for crimes their trafficker forces them to commit.

At the public Board of Supervisors policy [hearing](#) on October 1, 2024, trafficking survivors and policy experts are expected to attend and share their expertise and lived experience, detailing how this initiative will improve outcomes for children who have been trafficked, and decrease the rate of child trafficking in Los Angeles.

For questions, interview requests, or more information, contact SJI’s comms director, Sabra Boyd at sabra.boyd@lls.edu, or check out our exciting and innovative policy [initiatives](#).

