1

00:00:01,760 --> 00:00:12,480

[Music]

2

00:00:10,960 --> 00:00:14,719

Hello and welcome to

3

00:00:12,480 --> 00:00:15,599

Law and Liberty a Texas Attorney General

4

00:00:14,719 --> 00:00:17,600

Podcast

5

00:00:15,599 --> 00:00:19,199

during January which is National Human

6

00:00:17,600 --> 00:00:21,760

Trafficking Awareness Month we have a

7

00:00:19,199 --> 00:00:23,680

special two-part series of this podcast.

8

00:00:21,760 --> 00:00:26,080

Today I am joined by Attorney General

9

00:00:23,680 --> 00:00:28,560

Ken Paxton and deputy Attorney General

10

00:00:26,080 --> 00:00:30,400

of Criminal Justice Josh Reno

11

00:00:28,560 --> 00:00:32,079

Attorney General Paxton established the

12

00:00:30,400 --> 00:00:34,079

OAG's human trafficking and

13

00:00:32,079 --> 00:00:35,040

transnational organized crime unit in

14

00:00:34,079 --> 00:00:36,800

2016

15

00:00:35,040 --> 00:00:38,320

to combat human trafficking across the

16

00:00:36,800 --> 00:00:39,600

state and Josh reno

17

00:00:38,320 --> 00:00:41,520

while serving in the Travis County

18

00:00:39,600 --> 00:00:43,600

District Attorney's Office

19

00:00:41,520 --> 00:00:45,039

established the criminal enterprise and

20

00:00:43,600 --> 00:00:46,879

trafficking unit

21

00:00:45,039 --> 00:00:48,559

so from each of your perspectives i

22

00:00:46,879 --> 00:00:51,600

wanted to hear about why you thought

23

00:00:48,559 --> 00:00:54,239

creation of these units was necessary

24

00:00:51,600 --> 00:00:56,160

so I was in the Texas senate for a

25

00:00:54,239 --> 00:00:57,199

couple years and I knew nothing about

26

00:00:56,160 --> 00:01:00,480

human trafficking

27

00:00:57,199 --> 00:01:01,680

just vague idea of what it was and I sat

28

00:01:00,480 --> 00:01:03,280

in the committee

29

00:01:01,680 --> 00:01:04,879

and listened to a bill presented by

30

00:01:03,280 --> 00:01:06,560

senator leticia van de peke who's from

31

00:01:04,879 --> 00:01:08,640

san antonio area

32

00:01:06,560 --> 00:01:10,159

talking about just the horrific nature

33

00:01:08,640 --> 00:01:12,799

of the crime and what was happening

34

00:01:10,159 --> 00:01:14,560

mostly to young women and maybe it's

35

00:01:12,799 --> 00:01:17,119

because I have three daughters

36

00:01:14,560 --> 00:01:17,680

I felt just compelled like I should be a

37

00:01:17,119 --> 00:01:19,280

part of

38

00:01:17,680 --> 00:01:20,479

the solution that it was so bad i

39

00:01:19,280 --> 00:01:21,520

couldn't believe so much of this was

40

00:01:20,479 --> 00:01:24,400

going on in our state

41

00:01:21,520 --> 00:01:26,000

in our country and so I promised myself

42

00:01:24,400 --> 00:01:27,280

I I actually asked her

43

00:01:26,000 --> 00:01:28,880

if she needed help with the bill she had

44

00:01:27,280 --> 00:01:30,479

a republican sponsor and she was

45

00:01:28,880 --> 00:01:32,799

democrat she said no I said well

46

00:01:30,479 --> 00:01:34,320

put me down and let me know how I can

47

00:01:32,799 --> 00:01:35,759

help you work on this issue and i

48

00:01:34,320 --> 00:01:37,759

promised myself that

49

00:01:35,759 --> 00:01:39,040

I would do whatever I could to combat

50

00:01:37,759 --> 00:01:40,960

human trafficking so when I

51

00:01:39,040 --> 00:01:42,640

came to the Attorney General's Office it

52

00:01:40,960 --> 00:01:44,240

took us about a year to get it going and

53

00:01:42,640 --> 00:01:44,799

find the right people hire the right

54

00:01:44,240 --> 00:01:46,159

people

55

00:01:44,799 --> 00:01:47,600

we didn't necessarily have funding for

56

00:01:46,159 --> 00:01:48,880

the legislature but I wanted to prove to

57

00:01:47,600 --> 00:01:50,079

them that it was important and that we

58

00:01:48,880 --> 00:01:53,040

could do it right

59

00:01:50,079 --> 00:01:55,439

and so we put together a small team of

60

00:01:53,040 --> 00:01:57,119

prosecutors and investigators to start

61

00:01:55,439 --> 00:01:59,040

looking into human trafficking and

62

00:01:57,119 --> 00:01:59,920

trying to prosecute it and stop it and

63

00:01:59,040 --> 00:02:01,520

educate people

64

00:01:59,920 --> 00:02:02,960

and Josh when you're establishing your

65

00:02:01,520 --> 00:02:04,479

unit at the Travis County district

66

00:02:02,960 --> 00:02:05,200

attorney's office how did that go for

67

00:02:04,479 --> 00:02:07,600

you

68

00:02:05,200 --> 00:02:08,239

well I think for me the important part

69

00:02:07,600 --> 00:02:12,319

is

70

00:02:08,239 --> 00:02:15,520

um you have these victims that

71

00:02:12,319 --> 00:02:17,120

are all from all walks of life and

72

00:02:15,520 --> 00:02:18,800

if you've ever had an opportunity to sit

73

00:02:17,120 --> 00:02:19,920

down and discuss and talk to these like

74

00:02:18,800 --> 00:02:23,680

I have

75

00:02:19,920 --> 00:02:26,080

you understand just the impact

76

00:02:23,680 --> 00:02:27,520

of going through these situations and

77

00:02:26,080 --> 00:02:29,520

and how it can

78

00:02:27,520 --> 00:02:30,800

affect them you know not only for for

79

00:02:29,520 --> 00:02:31,680

the time being that they're being

80

00:02:30,800 --> 00:02:34,720

trafficked but

81

00:02:31,680 --> 00:02:36,319

like for the rest of their lives and so

82

00:02:34,720 --> 00:02:38,080

to prosecute those cases bring those

83

00:02:36,319 --> 00:02:41,760

people to justice that are doing this to

84

00:02:38,080 --> 00:02:44,160

to you know our sons daughters to anyone

85

00:02:41,760 --> 00:02:45,680

um it felt like it was important thing

86

00:02:44,160 --> 00:02:47,360

for us to do

87

00:02:45,680 --> 00:02:48,640

and I wanted to ask both of you what

88

00:02:47,360 --> 00:02:50,000

were some of the challenges that you

89

00:02:48,640 --> 00:02:51,519

faced in this I know you were starting

90

00:02:50,000 --> 00:02:53,599

on a state level you were starting on a

91

00:02:51,519 --> 00:02:55,200

county level but the crime is the same

92

00:02:53,599 --> 00:02:55,599

scale no matter what you're looking at

93

00:02:55,200 --> 00:02:56,959

so

94

00:02:55,599 --> 00:02:58,080

what were some of the difficulties in

95

00:02:56,959 --> 00:02:59,360

getting that started I know you

96

00:02:58,080 --> 00:03:00,720

mentioned the legislature

97

00:02:59,360 --> 00:03:02,560

yeah part of it for us was we didn't

98

00:03:00,720 --> 00:03:03,200

have any funding we didn't have anybody

99

00:03:02,560 --> 00:03:05,200

that

100

00:03:03,200 --> 00:03:06,560

was in our office at the time had done

101

00:03:05,200 --> 00:03:08,879

human trafficking

102

00:03:06,560 --> 00:03:09,840

cases and so we had to spend a lot of

103

00:03:08,879 --> 00:03:11,040

time

104

00:03:09,840 --> 00:03:13,360

first of all figuring out how we were

105

00:03:11,040 --> 00:03:14,720

going to fund it and two how how we're

106

00:03:13,360 --> 00:03:16,319

going to write people here to start

107

00:03:14,720 --> 00:03:17,840

working on it so we had to spend a lot

108

00:03:16,319 --> 00:03:19,360

of time you know outside the office

109

00:03:17,840 --> 00:03:21,280

interviewing people and

110

00:03:19,360 --> 00:03:23,280

trying to explain the vision that we

111

00:03:21,280 --> 00:03:25,280

have for us being

112

00:03:23,280 --> 00:03:27,360

a statewide agency that dealt with it

113

00:03:25,280 --> 00:03:29,440

and they could not only do what we do

114

00:03:27,360 --> 00:03:32,560

but also help them do what they do

115

00:03:29,440 --> 00:03:33,440

yeah money I mean funding is always the

116

00:03:32,560 --> 00:03:37,519

issue right

117

00:03:33,440 --> 00:03:40,879

um you know on a county level uh

118

00:03:37,519 --> 00:03:41,360

going in and trying to fix a problem you

119

00:03:40,879 --> 00:03:42,959

have to

120

00:03:41,360 --> 00:03:45,680

kind of more or less break it before you

121

00:03:42,959 --> 00:03:47,599

can fix it and so very similarly we

122

00:03:45,680 --> 00:03:49,200

didn't have any funding for it we just

123

00:03:47,599 --> 00:03:51,920

kind of created it and

124

00:03:49,200 --> 00:03:52,959

so in addition to some many other duties

125

00:03:51,920 --> 00:03:55,040

that I was doing

126

00:03:52,959 --> 00:03:56,720

I was taking on the trafficking cases

127

00:03:55,040 --> 00:03:58,480

and so

128

00:03:56,720 --> 00:04:00,400

it starts out with trying to reach out

129

00:03:58,480 --> 00:04:02,000

to law enforcement build those

130

00:04:00,400 --> 00:04:03,519

relationships with people so that if the

131

00:04:02,000 --> 00:04:04,959

cases do you know

132

00:04:03,519 --> 00:04:06,640

start to get investigated you're there

133

00:04:04,959 --> 00:04:08,239

on the very beginning of it and that

134

00:04:06,640 --> 00:04:09,519

wasn't really it you know the difficult

135

00:04:08,239 --> 00:04:10,879

part it was just kind of

136

00:04:09,519 --> 00:04:13,280

finding out who the players are that you

137

00:04:10,879 --> 00:04:15,040

need to talk to whenever you're

138

00:04:13,280 --> 00:04:16,400

trying to to build this coalition if you

139

00:04:15,040 --> 00:04:17,440

will it's difficult to

140

00:04:16,400 --> 00:04:19,280

you know make sure that you've got all

141

00:04:17,440 --> 00:04:19,840

the right people at the table so that

142

00:04:19,280 --> 00:04:22,079

was

143

00:04:19,840 --> 00:04:24,000

part of our big hurdle and speaking of

144

00:04:22,079 --> 00:04:25,840

building coalitions so the oag

145

00:04:24,000 --> 00:04:27,600

currently leads the human trafficking

146

00:04:25,840 --> 00:04:29,280

prevention coordinating council

147

00:04:27,600 --> 00:04:31,360

for the state and this is a ton of state

148

00:04:29,280 --> 00:04:33,520

agencies involved they just released

149

00:04:31,360 --> 00:04:35,199

phase one of this plan which is a very

150

00:04:33,520 --> 00:04:37,199

broad look assessing

151

00:04:35,199 --> 00:04:38,880

task forces how they're working together

152

00:04:37,199 --> 00:04:40,240

what's available for victims

153

00:04:38,880 --> 00:04:42,080

can you guys give me an idea a little

154

00:04:40,240 --> 00:04:43,919

bit of what it's like to lead such a

155

00:04:42,080 --> 00:04:47,199

huge organization like that

156

00:04:43,919 --> 00:04:48,720

sure uh you know not to say that it's

157

00:04:47,199 --> 00:04:50,560

underwhelming uh but it's not

158

00:04:48,720 --> 00:04:52,000

overwhelming because you know

159

00:04:50,560 --> 00:04:53,199

each one of these agencies feels

160

00:04:52,000 --> 00:04:54,479

passionately about it that's why they're

161

00:04:53,199 --> 00:04:55,600

there that's why they're a part of that

162

00:04:54,479 --> 00:04:58,000

council

163

00:04:55,600 --> 00:04:59,919

and so you know the easy part is you

164

00:04:58,000 --> 00:05:01,280

know getting people moving but anytime

165

00:04:59,919 --> 00:05:04,479

you have

166

00:05:01,280 --> 00:05:05,759

that many players at the table

167

00:05:04,479 --> 00:05:06,960

you know sometimes we can talk about it

168

00:05:05,759 --> 00:05:08,240

we can talk and we can talk and we can

169

00:05:06,960 --> 00:05:09,680

keep talking but you know at some point

170

00:05:08,240 --> 00:05:11,280

you've got to start doing stuff

171

00:05:09,680 --> 00:05:13,039

and so that's always any time you have a

172

00:05:11,280 --> 00:05:14,160

committee it's a difficult part it's

173

00:05:13,039 --> 00:05:17,199

moving to some action

174

00:05:14,160 --> 00:05:19,919

and so um you know it's it is a

175

00:05:17,199 --> 00:05:21,280

great organization for us to be a part

176

00:05:19,919 --> 00:05:23,680

of and to lead

177

00:05:21,280 --> 00:05:24,400

uh and to be you know moving things

178

00:05:23,680 --> 00:05:25,840

forward because

179

00:05:24,400 --> 00:05:27,360

we've got a lot of stuff that we've

180

00:05:25,840 --> 00:05:28,560

talked about and we're getting you know

181

00:05:27,360 --> 00:05:29,199

to the point where we're moving on

182

00:05:28,560 --> 00:05:30,560

things

183

00:05:29,199 --> 00:05:32,479

and what I love about it gives us

184

00:05:30,560 --> 00:05:34,000

leverage because we only have as we

185

00:05:32,479 --> 00:05:35,440

already discussed we only have so many

186

00:05:34,000 --> 00:05:36,160

resources to deal with human trafficking

187

00:05:35,440 --> 00:05:39,199

so

188

00:05:36,160 --> 00:05:39,680

it's nice to have synergies with these

189

00:05:39,199 --> 00:05:41,680

other

190

00:05:39,680 --> 00:05:43,520

agencies to work with them so that we

191

00:05:41,680 --> 00:05:45,280

can all get more done

192

00:05:43,520 --> 00:05:47,039

than we would alone so I like the fact

193

00:05:45,280 --> 00:05:48,800

that we're all communicating

194

00:05:47,039 --> 00:05:50,800

because even though sometimes it's hard

195

00:05:48,800 --> 00:05:53,039

to get action out of a large group

196

00:05:50,800 --> 00:05:54,080

at the same time if you are effective in

197

00:05:53,039 --> 00:05:55,759

getting action

198

00:05:54,080 --> 00:05:57,520

you get a whole lot more done together

199

00:05:55,759 --> 00:05:58,720

than you could alone absolutely

200

00:05:57,520 --> 00:06:00,160

and that in government you see that all

201

00:05:58,720 --> 00:06:01,199

the time where you know everybody's

202

00:06:00,160 --> 00:06:03,440

doing their own thing

203

00:06:01,199 --> 00:06:05,039

what I love about this group is that

204

00:06:03,440 --> 00:06:07,759

we're working together

205

00:06:05,039 --> 00:06:09,840

mean Texas is a big state and so to to

206

00:06:07,759 --> 00:06:11,840

affect not only just small portions of

207

00:06:09,840 --> 00:06:13,919

the entire state it's important to have

208

00:06:11,840 --> 00:06:15,120

this large group and be able to affect

209

00:06:13,919 --> 00:06:17,039

things that are not just happening here

210

00:06:15,120 --> 00:06:19,199

in Travis County or williamson county

211

00:06:17,039 --> 00:06:21,280

but you know down on the border out in

212

00:06:19,199 --> 00:06:21,600

west Texas in the metropolitan areas

213

00:06:21,280 --> 00:06:23,600

like

214

00:06:21,600 --> 00:06:25,360

we need to have all those people

215

00:06:23,600 --> 00:06:26,400

together so we can get our message out

216

00:06:25,360 --> 00:06:28,800

and

217

00:06:26,400 --> 00:06:30,000

effectively you know outreach and

218

00:06:28,800 --> 00:06:31,520

prosecute these cases

219

00:06:30,000 --> 00:06:33,120

yeah what has that coordination been

220

00:06:31,520 --> 00:06:34,560

like have you seen I mean a lot of

221

00:06:33,120 --> 00:06:36,240

people are very interested in this and

222

00:06:34,560 --> 00:06:36,960

want to help combat human trafficking

223

00:06:36,240 --> 00:06:38,800

but have people

224

00:06:36,960 --> 00:06:40,160

volunteered to assist with you guys have

225

00:06:38,800 --> 00:06:40,720

you reached out to them or has it been a

226

00:06:40,160 --> 00:06:42,000

mutual

227

00:06:40,720 --> 00:06:44,400

meeting in the middle we're going to get

228

00:06:42,000 --> 00:06:46,479

this done

229

00:06:44,400 --> 00:06:47,440

I think from my end uh what we've seen

230

00:06:46,479 --> 00:06:49,520

is

231

00:06:47,440 --> 00:06:51,039

you know our our shop is kind of two

232

00:06:49,520 --> 00:06:52,639

parts we have an outreach and we have a

233

00:06:51,039 --> 00:06:55,120

prosecution end

234

00:06:52,639 --> 00:06:55,840

and taking the outreach part to the

235

00:06:55,120 --> 00:06:57,919

point where

236

00:06:55,840 --> 00:07:00,400

we we are you know I think we contacted

237

00:06:57,919 --> 00:07:03,919

something like 2,000 district attorneys

238

00:07:00,400 --> 00:07:05,280

sheriffs uh nonprofits and NGO's

239

00:07:03,919 --> 00:07:08,000

and so just compiling all that

240

00:07:05,280 --> 00:07:09,520

information can be difficult but

241

00:07:08,000 --> 00:07:11,120

I think what we have found is by

242

00:07:09,520 --> 00:07:12,560

reaching out and and

243

00:07:11,120 --> 00:07:14,160

letting people know that we're here and

244

00:07:12,560 --> 00:07:15,599

what we can do for them

245

00:07:14,160 --> 00:07:18,080

not only on a you know our training

246

00:07:15,599 --> 00:07:20,639

level but also on a prosecutorial level

247

00:07:18,080 --> 00:07:21,680

um we've had a huge number of people you

248

00:07:20,639 --> 00:07:23,680

know

249

00:07:21,680 --> 00:07:25,919

one just reaching out back to us and

250

00:07:23,680 --> 00:07:27,759

saying yes we absolutely need your help

251

00:07:25,919 --> 00:07:30,240

we want you to come in and so that has

252

00:07:27,759 --> 00:07:33,039

been uh profound in my

253

00:07:30,240 --> 00:07:33,360

from what i've seen as far as reaching

254

00:07:33,039 --> 00:07:34,800

out

255

00:07:33,360 --> 00:07:36,479

getting the feedback from them of like

256

00:07:34,800 --> 00:07:36,880

this is exactly what we wanted that's

257

00:07:36,479 --> 00:07:40,479

great

258

00:07:36,880 --> 00:07:41,520

yeah so going off of that I wanted to

259

00:07:40,479 --> 00:07:43,840

talk a little bit more about the

260

00:07:41,520 --> 00:07:45,280

motivations behind human trafficking

261

00:07:43,840 --> 00:07:47,759

fighting human trafficking

262

00:07:45,280 --> 00:07:49,919

what you guys do every day what kind of

263

00:07:47,759 --> 00:07:52,560

experiences or cases did you see that

264

00:07:49,919 --> 00:07:56,840

got you personally invested in this

265

00:07:52,560 --> 00:08:00,879

you know I think for me early on

266

00:07:56,840 --> 00:08:02,879

um you see these young women

267

00:08:00,879 --> 00:08:04,080

and the way human let me kind of give a

268

00:08:02,879 --> 00:08:07,360

some overview of it

269

00:08:04,080 --> 00:08:10,160

the way human trafficking works is

270

00:08:07,360 --> 00:08:10,639

the traffickers are preying on a young

271

00:08:10,160 --> 00:08:13,680

woman

272

00:08:10,639 --> 00:08:14,479

or a young man whose situation that

273

00:08:13,680 --> 00:08:16,800

they're currently in

274

00:08:14,479 --> 00:08:18,319

you got to remember they're starting out

275

00:08:16,800 --> 00:08:19,680

in some way

276

00:08:18,319 --> 00:08:21,599

in a situation that they don't want to

277

00:08:19,680 --> 00:08:22,560

be anymore and so they'd rather be with

278

00:08:21,599 --> 00:08:24,000

a trafficker

279

00:08:22,560 --> 00:08:25,120

than in the situation that they're in

280

00:08:24,000 --> 00:08:26,479

and traffickers are looking for

281

00:08:25,120 --> 00:08:28,160

vulnerable absolutely

282

00:08:26,479 --> 00:08:30,879

and they're they take advantage of that

283

00:08:28,160 --> 00:08:32,240

and you know what we see so many times

284

00:08:30,879 --> 00:08:34,800

through social media whether that be

285

00:08:32,240 --> 00:08:36,880

instagram or facebook

286

00:08:34,800 --> 00:08:38,000

the traffickers are literally throwing

287

00:08:36,880 --> 00:08:42,159

out this net

288

00:08:38,000 --> 00:08:45,760

of you know through instant messages to

289

00:08:42,159 --> 00:08:47,760

all these young women young men just

290

00:08:45,760 --> 00:08:49,200

just to see what they get back see see

291

00:08:47,760 --> 00:08:51,519

who they can reel in

292

00:08:49,200 --> 00:08:53,519

and and from there it's just almost

293

00:08:51,519 --> 00:08:56,080

immediate because they're able to see

294

00:08:53,519 --> 00:08:57,360

that they they're that their victims are

295

00:08:56,080 --> 00:08:59,279

ready and they're vulnerable and they

296

00:08:57,360 --> 00:09:02,240

take advantage of that and exploit it

297

00:08:59,279 --> 00:09:03,839

and then it reaches a level that uh is

298

00:09:02,240 --> 00:09:06,560

just heartbreaking because they're

299

00:09:03,839 --> 00:09:07,519

these these people these victims are

300

00:09:06,560 --> 00:09:10,240

taken

301

00:09:07,519 --> 00:09:11,120

away and now they're just complete

302

00:09:10,240 --> 00:09:12,480

controlled

303

00:09:11,120 --> 00:09:14,720

everything they do everything that

304

00:09:12,480 --> 00:09:16,720

they're allowed to do uh is completely

305

00:09:14,720 --> 00:09:18,560

controlled by those traffickers and so

306

00:09:16,720 --> 00:09:20,000

early on the cases that I was involved

307

00:09:18,560 --> 00:09:21,920

with uh it was

308

00:09:20,000 --> 00:09:23,200

heartbreaking and not to go into too

309

00:09:21,920 --> 00:09:27,120

many details but

310

00:09:23,200 --> 00:09:28,720

uh it's eye-opening to me um how

311

00:09:27,120 --> 00:09:30,480

you know if you're you've talked about

312

00:09:28,720 --> 00:09:31,839

your kids i'm a father

313

00:09:30,480 --> 00:09:33,040

you know we wouldn't you know leave our

314

00:09:31,839 --> 00:09:34,560

kids at the house by themselves and

315

00:09:33,040 --> 00:09:36,880

leave the doors open and just allow

316

00:09:34,560 --> 00:09:38,959

somebody to just walk right in

317

00:09:36,880 --> 00:09:40,320

but through social media that's kind of

318

00:09:38,959 --> 00:09:42,399

what we do and we have

319

00:09:40,320 --> 00:09:44,240

the ability or the traffickers have the

320

00:09:42,399 --> 00:09:46,160

ability to just walk right in

321

00:09:44,240 --> 00:09:48,399

and and scoop up these victims that are

322

00:09:46,160 --> 00:09:50,720

vulnerable and so

323

00:09:48,399 --> 00:09:52,560

seeing that and actually looking at the

324

00:09:50,720 --> 00:09:53,360

messages where you you know from our end

325

00:09:52,560 --> 00:09:54,959

we have

326

00:09:53,360 --> 00:09:56,720

all these records showing that you know

327

00:09:54,959 --> 00:09:58,880

that thousands and thousands

328

00:09:56,720 --> 00:10:00,480

of messages out to people and it just

329

00:09:58,880 --> 00:10:03,600

takes one for them to get back

330

00:10:00,480 --> 00:10:04,160

and and they're moving as soon as

331

00:10:03,600 --> 00:10:05,519

they're done

332

00:10:04,160 --> 00:10:07,360

trafficking that one they're moving on

333

00:10:05,519 --> 00:10:09,600

to the next one and it's heartbreaking

334

00:10:07,360 --> 00:10:11,360

so Kelly I think for me we filmed a

335

00:10:09,600 --> 00:10:12,480

video shortly after we started our human

336

00:10:11,360 --> 00:10:14,160

trafficking unit that we

337

00:10:12,480 --> 00:10:16,959

put out called be the one which is still

338

00:10:14,160 --> 00:10:19,519

out there and I realized that

339

00:10:16,959 --> 00:10:21,040

really it takes one person to make a

340

00:10:19,519 --> 00:10:21,920

difference in these people's lives as an

341

00:10:21,040 --> 00:10:23,680

example

342

00:10:21,920 --> 00:10:25,120

in the video there's a woman named Tanya

343

00:10:23,680 --> 00:10:26,160

and she was in traffic and she was at

344

00:10:25,120 --> 00:10:27,920

this house

345

00:10:26,160 --> 00:10:29,200

and another woman who was a neighbor

346

00:10:27,920 --> 00:10:31,200

noticed that she

347

00:10:29,200 --> 00:10:32,560

would come out just once a week to

348

00:10:31,200 --> 00:10:34,000

remove the trash

349

00:10:32,560 --> 00:10:36,240

so she decided that she was going to

350

00:10:34,000 --> 00:10:37,760

find out who she was and so she just

351

00:10:36,240 --> 00:10:39,440

you know took the time to care about

352

00:10:37,760 --> 00:10:41,360

this young woman

353

00:10:39,440 --> 00:10:42,640

and went doctor and said hey you know

354

00:10:41,360 --> 00:10:44,320

introduced herself and said

355

00:10:42,640 --> 00:10:46,640

do you need help and she said yes I do

356

00:10:44,320 --> 00:10:48,560

and she went into the situation and

357

00:10:46,640 --> 00:10:50,160

this woman this neighbor basically

358

00:10:48,560 --> 00:10:52,480

rescued her from human trafficking now

359

00:10:50,160 --> 00:10:54,240

tanya heads up a human trafficking

360

00:10:52,480 --> 00:10:55,519

organization to stop human trafficking i

361

00:10:54,240 --> 00:10:57,200

think in the death sorry so it's a

362

00:10:55,519 --> 00:10:58,160

remarkable just like one woman made a

363

00:10:57,200 --> 00:11:01,040

difference in this

364

00:10:58,160 --> 00:11:02,399

video that we have is stories of people

365

00:11:01,040 --> 00:11:04,399

that just stepped into

366

00:11:02,399 --> 00:11:06,560

situations like that and so it made me

367

00:11:04,399 --> 00:11:08,320

realize you know through education

368

00:11:06,560 --> 00:11:10,240

and through what we do in our office

369

00:11:08,320 --> 00:11:11,920

investigation prosecution that

370

00:11:10,240 --> 00:11:13,200

we can make those types of differences

371

00:11:11,920 --> 00:11:15,760

and we're not going to save everybody

372

00:11:13,200 --> 00:11:18,000

it's just not possible but

373

00:11:15,760 --> 00:11:19,760

if we save a tanya and we save another

374

00:11:18,000 --> 00:11:22,959

Tanya and we save another Tanya from

375

00:11:19,760 --> 00:11:25,120

a life of misery and and being abused

376

00:11:22,959 --> 00:11:26,399

you know it's it's good and we should do

377

00:11:25,120 --> 00:11:28,640

that it's worth it

378

00:11:26,399 --> 00:11:29,839

Tanya actually reached out um doing

379

00:11:28,640 --> 00:11:31,440

great work in dallas she reached out to

380

00:11:29,839 --> 00:11:33,760

me a few months ago and we were able to

381

00:11:31,440 --> 00:11:35,200

you know about a victim that needed help

382

00:11:33,760 --> 00:11:36,880

immediately we were able to

383

00:11:35,200 --> 00:11:38,320

get her in contact with our team and

384

00:11:36,880 --> 00:11:40,079

make sure that she was in contact with

385

00:11:38,320 --> 00:11:41,360

the right law enforcement officials and

386

00:11:40,079 --> 00:11:42,240

NGO's so that they were getting some

387

00:11:41,360 --> 00:11:43,600

services and

388

00:11:42,240 --> 00:11:45,200

and hopefully you know resolving that

389

00:11:43,600 --> 00:11:46,000

issue as quickly as possible and so now

390

00:11:45,200 --> 00:11:47,680

Tanya's helping

391

00:11:46,000 --> 00:11:49,920

people exactly and we're hearing stories

392

00:11:47,680 --> 00:11:52,800

about Tony helping us it's a remarkable

393

00:11:49,920 --> 00:11:54,839

what good can come up doing good and

394

00:11:52,800 --> 00:11:56,240

just one person can make that much of an

395

00:11:54,839 --> 00:11:58,800

impact

396

00:11:56,240 --> 00:12:00,399

yeah I also um specific to our human

397

00:11:58,800 --> 00:12:02,079

trafficking unit right now and I know

398

00:12:00,399 --> 00:12:04,079

there's a lot going on we're working on

399

00:12:02,079 --> 00:12:06,000

a lot of cases a lot of trainings

400

00:12:04,079 --> 00:12:08,240

and they're a little bit not scattered

401

00:12:06,000 --> 00:12:09,760

but spread out across the state

402

00:12:08,240 --> 00:12:11,760

what do you think their biggest strength

403

00:12:09,760 --> 00:12:14,560

is right now what is the

404

00:12:11,760 --> 00:12:16,000

leading charge well I think the biggest

405

00:12:14,560 --> 00:12:19,040

strength we have is we have

406

00:12:16,000 --> 00:12:20,480

probably the biggest assemblage of

407

00:12:19,040 --> 00:12:22,720

people that do human trafficking

408

00:12:20,480 --> 00:12:24,880

prosecutions and

409

00:12:22,720 --> 00:12:26,560

we're trying to figure out ways that we

410

00:12:24,880 --> 00:12:27,360

can better connect with the district

411

00:12:26,560 --> 00:12:28,320

attorney's other

412

00:12:27,360 --> 00:12:29,600

state because right now we don't have

413

00:12:28,320 --> 00:12:31,680

the authority to actually prosecute

414

00:12:29,600 --> 00:12:34,160

human trafficking which is crazy but

415

00:12:31,680 --> 00:12:35,279

so we have to we have to we have to find

416

00:12:34,160 --> 00:12:37,120

ways to connect with

417

00:12:35,279 --> 00:12:38,399

other district attorneys to refer those

418

00:12:37,120 --> 00:12:40,720

cases because we have

419

00:12:38,399 --> 00:12:42,240

the resources and the talent to

420

00:12:40,720 --> 00:12:44,079

especially deal with cases that go

421

00:12:42,240 --> 00:12:46,320

outside of the county which is

422

00:12:44,079 --> 00:12:47,120

you know which we're in a big state 254

423

00:12:46,320 --> 00:12:49,440

counties and

424

00:12:47,120 --> 00:12:51,600

many of these da's have would have a

425

00:12:49,440 --> 00:12:54,959

more difficult time prosecuting

426

00:12:51,600 --> 00:12:55,440

you know a multi-county or across the

427

00:12:54,959 --> 00:12:57,519

state

428

00:12:55,440 --> 00:12:59,519

human trafficking organization so you

429

00:12:57,519 --> 00:13:01,120

know we offer that type of health and

430

00:12:59,519 --> 00:13:02,639

we're trying to communicate that to the

431

00:13:01,120 --> 00:13:04,000

district attorneys that'll send us these

432

00:13:02,639 --> 00:13:05,360

cases and we can make a difference

433

00:13:04,000 --> 00:13:07,279

and he was talking about the talent i

434

00:13:05,360 --> 00:13:08,160

just want to kind of brag on my people

435

00:13:07,279 --> 00:13:10,720

so we have several

436

00:13:08,160 --> 00:13:12,160

seven criminal attorneys uh two civil

437

00:13:10,720 --> 00:13:14,720

attorneys that are assigned to our

438

00:13:12,160 --> 00:13:15,440

human trafficking division um we also

439

00:13:14,720 --> 00:13:16,959

have an out

440

00:13:15,440 --> 00:13:18,959

kind of our outreach program as well

441

00:13:16,959 --> 00:13:21,279

program and so

442

00:13:18,959 --> 00:13:22,000

but those seven criminal attorneys um

443

00:13:21,279 --> 00:13:24,079

through them

444

00:13:22,000 --> 00:13:26,240

they've got over 100 years of legal

445

00:13:24,079 --> 00:13:28,000

experience in 25 years of that is

446

00:13:26,240 --> 00:13:30,639

specific to human trafficking

447

00:13:28,000 --> 00:13:31,120

wow that is an enormous talent I if you

448

00:13:30,639 --> 00:13:32,560

talk about

449

00:13:31,120 --> 00:13:34,720

the question was how many what is our

450

00:13:32,560 --> 00:13:36,240

strength that's our strength we've got

451

00:13:34,720 --> 00:13:37,680

you know boots on the ground knowledge

452

00:13:36,240 --> 00:13:38,959

of how to try these cases and these are

453

00:13:37,680 --> 00:13:41,680

complex

454

00:13:38,959 --> 00:13:43,279

um you know in so many different ways

455

00:13:41,680 --> 00:13:45,199

complex we're not just talking about

456

00:13:43,279 --> 00:13:46,720

you know multI counties that they've

457

00:13:45,199 --> 00:13:48,959

been trafficked through

458

00:13:46,720 --> 00:13:50,639

and be knowing where to go reach out to

459

00:13:48,959 --> 00:13:51,199

to get the evidence that we need in

460

00:13:50,639 --> 00:13:53,440

order

461

00:13:51,199 --> 00:13:54,880

uh to successfully prosecute those cases

462

00:13:53,440 --> 00:13:56,399

but just the

463

00:13:54,880 --> 00:13:57,600

complexities of dealing with a victim

464

00:13:56,399 --> 00:13:58,480

that has gone through what they've gone

465

00:13:57,600 --> 00:14:00,800

through

466

00:13:58,480 --> 00:14:01,760

having that kind of experience and

467

00:14:00,800 --> 00:14:04,639

knowing

468

00:14:01,760 --> 00:14:06,639

how to handle those and having not only

469

00:14:04,639 --> 00:14:07,519

the experience in prosecuting it but

470

00:14:06,639 --> 00:14:10,240

knowing

471

00:14:07,519 --> 00:14:10,800

uh all of the you know services that are

472

00:14:10,240 --> 00:14:12,560

available

473

00:14:10,800 --> 00:14:14,880

so that that victim not only is one

474

00:14:12,560 --> 00:14:16,800

prepared to go to trial and we can

475

00:14:14,880 --> 00:14:18,959

successfully prosecute it but that

476

00:14:16,800 --> 00:14:20,560

victim's going to be in a better spot

477

00:14:18,959 --> 00:14:21,920

after the prosecution of that case

478

00:14:20,560 --> 00:14:22,720

hopefully because they've got the

479

00:14:21,920 --> 00:14:25,040

services

480

00:14:22,720 --> 00:14:26,880

that they need and that's why I created

481

00:14:25,040 --> 00:14:29,360

it I wanted an organization

482

00:14:26,880 --> 00:14:30,000

that was statewide that could

483

00:14:29,360 --> 00:14:31,680

specifically

484

00:14:30,000 --> 00:14:33,839

address with great talent great

485

00:14:31,680 --> 00:14:35,279

resources human trafficking so that we

486

00:14:33,839 --> 00:14:36,880

could start

487

00:14:35,279 --> 00:14:39,440

putting into this just like we did human

488

00:14:36,880 --> 00:14:42,240

slavery in the 1860s

489

00:14:39,440 --> 00:14:44,079

we should not have this type of you know

490

00:14:42,240 --> 00:14:45,680

human trafficking our country we we can

491

00:14:44,079 --> 00:14:47,199

start shopping in Texas

492

00:14:45,680 --> 00:14:49,040

and hopefully the rest of the nation

493

00:14:47,199 --> 00:14:49,519

will catch on yeah and our team is busy

494

00:14:49,040 --> 00:14:51,040

but

495

00:14:49,519 --> 00:14:52,639

you know and maybe they won't want to

496

00:14:51,040 --> 00:14:55,360

say this but they can do more

497

00:14:52,639 --> 00:14:57,040

we've got the ability to to go in and

498

00:14:55,360 --> 00:14:58,560

help any county that needs us

499

00:14:57,040 --> 00:14:59,839

and so you know our doors are open and

500

00:14:58,560 --> 00:15:01,120

all they can do is pick up the phone and

501

00:14:59,839 --> 00:15:02,399

let them know because they'll be there

502

00:15:01,120 --> 00:15:04,160

yeah and like you mentioned about a

503

00:15:02,399 --> 00:15:06,399

victim services a lot of people don't

504

00:15:04,160 --> 00:15:08,079

know that we do have a lot of resources

505

00:15:06,399 --> 00:15:09,279

for victims we can provide a lot of help

506

00:15:08,079 --> 00:15:10,959

we can get them the preparation and get

507

00:15:09,279 --> 00:15:12,240

them to a safe spot if they need it

508

00:15:10,959 --> 00:15:14,320

yeah and one of the things that we've

509

00:15:12,240 --> 00:15:17,760

got kind of coming up on the horizon is

510

00:15:14,320 --> 00:15:19,120

a um one of the things that I learned

511

00:15:17,760 --> 00:15:19,760

about human trafficking early on was

512

00:15:19,120 --> 00:15:22,480

everybody

513

00:15:19,760 --> 00:15:23,760

you know you you cannot listen and hear

514

00:15:22,480 --> 00:15:25,839

stories about human trafficking

515

00:15:23,760 --> 00:15:27,760

and brush it off like it affects

516

00:15:25,839 --> 00:15:29,680

everybody that's that sat down and taken

517

00:15:27,760 --> 00:15:31,360

the time to look at these things and so

518

00:15:29,680 --> 00:15:32,720

everybody has you know i've played

519

00:15:31,360 --> 00:15:34,079

sports a lot so I use a lot of sports

520

00:15:32,720 --> 00:15:35,440

analogies everybody has a football and

521

00:15:34,079 --> 00:15:37,519

everybody wants to run with it

522

00:15:35,440 --> 00:15:39,120

uh nobody really knows which direction

523

00:15:37,519 --> 00:15:41,199

to run and so you get a lot of efforts

524

00:15:39,120 --> 00:15:43,120

kind of being spread out and so

525

00:15:41,199 --> 00:15:44,639

one it's very comprehensive like there's

526

00:15:43,120 --> 00:15:46,959

tons of things out there

527

00:15:44,639 --> 00:15:48,160

for our victims to avail themselves of

528

00:15:46,959 --> 00:15:50,639

but what we're trying to do

529

00:15:48,160 --> 00:15:51,519

is basically pull that all together so a

530

00:15:50,639 --> 00:15:54,079

one-stop shop

531

00:15:51,519 --> 00:15:55,279

they can come to a website and find

532

00:15:54,079 --> 00:15:56,639

whatever services they need

533

00:15:55,279 --> 00:15:58,320

in their area and so we've got that

534

00:15:56,639 --> 00:15:59,920

coming up on the horizon

535

00:15:58,320 --> 00:16:01,519

that's fantastic you beat me to it but i

536

00:15:59,920 --> 00:16:02,959

was going to ask you no no it's perfect

537

00:16:01,519 --> 00:16:04,160

I was going to ask you about the next

538

00:16:02,959 --> 00:16:05,600

steps and next initiatives that you

539

00:16:04,160 --> 00:16:06,320

wanted to see with us to build it out

540

00:16:05,600 --> 00:16:08,800

more so

541

00:16:06,320 --> 00:16:09,920

since you've said that too what would

542

00:16:08,800 --> 00:16:11,920

you like to add on to it what are the

543

00:16:09,920 --> 00:16:13,199

next huge steps for the trafficking unit

544

00:16:11,920 --> 00:16:15,839

I think I think for us

545

00:16:13,199 --> 00:16:16,959

um you know and these are always back to

546

00:16:15,839 --> 00:16:20,000

the money and funding

547

00:16:16,959 --> 00:16:23,279

um what we want to do is

548

00:16:20,000 --> 00:16:26,160

start bringing in law enforcement

549

00:16:23,279 --> 00:16:27,680

to the table multi-jurisdictional

550

00:16:26,160 --> 00:16:30,160

whether that be the county

551

00:16:27,680 --> 00:16:31,519

police departments federal we want to

552

00:16:30,160 --> 00:16:33,199

bring prosecution together so we're

553

00:16:31,519 --> 00:16:33,759

talking about best practices of not only

554

00:16:33,199 --> 00:16:35,199

you know

555

00:16:33,759 --> 00:16:36,480

obviously we want to successfully

556

00:16:35,199 --> 00:16:38,160

prosecute a case and the way you

557

00:16:36,480 --> 00:16:41,199

successfully prosecute a case is have

558

00:16:38,160 --> 00:16:42,000

a good investigation and so what we're

559

00:16:41,199 --> 00:16:43,279

doing is

560

00:16:42,000 --> 00:16:44,560

bringing people together we're going to

561

00:16:43,279 --> 00:16:46,079

start right here in Austin we're trying

562

00:16:44,560 --> 00:16:48,399

to do a central Texas

563

00:16:46,079 --> 00:16:49,920

task force where law enforcement come

564

00:16:48,399 --> 00:16:50,880

together we talk about best practices we

565

00:16:49,920 --> 00:16:52,800

can talk about

566

00:16:50,880 --> 00:16:54,320

you know information sharing so that if

567

00:16:52,800 --> 00:16:56,000

there's a trafficker that everybody's at

568

00:16:54,320 --> 00:16:57,519

least handled or looked at

569

00:16:56,000 --> 00:16:59,600

and they're they're doing investigations

570

00:16:57,519 --> 00:17:00,959

on we can pull those resources together

571

00:16:59,600 --> 00:17:02,959

uh to go after and get the best

572

00:17:00,959 --> 00:17:04,720

investigation we can you know the other

573

00:17:02,959 --> 00:17:06,319

parts talking about information

574

00:17:04,720 --> 00:17:08,480

that we really want to do is figure out

575

00:17:06,319 --> 00:17:09,919

a way uh to have

576

00:17:08,480 --> 00:17:11,679

you know what we refer to as a fusion

577

00:17:09,919 --> 00:17:13,280

center uh if if

578

00:17:11,679 --> 00:17:15,199

harris county or somebody down in

579

00:17:13,280 --> 00:17:16,799

Houston police department knows

580

00:17:15,199 --> 00:17:18,319

that there's a trafficker in Houston

581

00:17:16,799 --> 00:17:19,679

who has communicated with somebody out

582

00:17:18,319 --> 00:17:20,640

in west Texas and they're heading up to

583

00:17:19,679 --> 00:17:22,240

Lubbock

584

00:17:20,640 --> 00:17:24,000

we want to be able to have real-time

585

00:17:22,240 --> 00:17:25,919

information so that

586

00:17:24,000 --> 00:17:27,039

investigators in Lubbock know that that

587

00:17:25,919 --> 00:17:27,679

trafficker is on the way and that

588

00:17:27,039 --> 00:17:28,960

they're there to

589

00:17:27,679 --> 00:17:30,799

you know basically pick up that

590

00:17:28,960 --> 00:17:33,280

vulnerable child so if we

591

00:17:30,799 --> 00:17:34,480

if we could do that uh I mean it's it's

592

00:17:33,280 --> 00:17:35,200

a big lift but that's the direction

593

00:17:34,480 --> 00:17:37,520

we're moving

594

00:17:35,200 --> 00:17:39,520

yeah I love what he's doing uh I know

595

00:17:37,520 --> 00:17:41,039

that the our state police

596

00:17:39,520 --> 00:17:42,720

were given a lot of resources by the

597

00:17:41,039 --> 00:17:44,240

legislature to investigate

598

00:17:42,720 --> 00:17:46,400

so i'm hoping that we can do more with

599

00:17:44,240 --> 00:17:48,000

them given that they have

600

00:17:46,400 --> 00:17:49,440

a lot of resources they were given a lot

601

00:17:48,000 --> 00:17:51,760

of money to go investigate

602

00:17:49,440 --> 00:17:53,200

and so i'm hoping that there can be some

603

00:17:51,760 --> 00:17:56,400

some working with the

604

00:17:53,200 --> 00:17:58,480

with the state police dps to help us

605

00:17:56,400 --> 00:17:59,440

bring some of those things to fruition

606

00:17:58,480 --> 00:18:01,600

and justice

607

00:17:59,440 --> 00:18:03,200

definitely the door is open doors open

608

00:18:01,600 --> 00:18:04,960

the door is open

609

00:18:03,200 --> 00:18:06,720

thank you Attorney General Paxton and

610

00:18:04,960 --> 00:18:08,880

thank you Joshua Reno for joining us

611

00:18:06,720 --> 00:18:10,320

today and going through this information

612

00:18:08,880 --> 00:18:12,880

and thank you to our listeners for

613

00:18:10,320 --> 00:18:13,440

tuning in um next time we'll be going

614

00:18:12,880 --> 00:18:15,280

over

615

00:18:13,440 --> 00:18:17,039

a little bit more of a deep dive into

616

00:18:15,280 --> 00:18:18,799

some cases statistics and

617

00:18:17,039 --> 00:18:21,120

red flags we'll be visiting with

618

00:18:18,799 --> 00:18:22,880

Assistant Attorneys General Cara Pierce

619

00:18:21,120 --> 00:18:24,240

and Brooke Grona-Rob from the Human

620

00:18:22,880 --> 00:18:29,840

Trafficking unit

621

00:18:24,240 --> 00:18:29,840

we'll see you next time thank you

622

00:18:30,600 --> 00:18:37,289

[Music]