



**SHARED HOPE EXAMINES SEX TRAFFICKING IN ARIZONA  
NON-PROFIT COMBATS SEX TRAFFICKING IN ARIZONA, CREATING A SAFER STATE FOR KIDS**

**December 6, 2010**—Washington, D.C.—Shared Hope International has been busy in Arizona. From conducting a state-wide assessment of how domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) victims are identified and provided services to preparing for the launch of the national, Protected Innocence Initiative—starting with Arizona—Shared Hope is making strides in the Grand Canyon State to keep kids safe.

On Thursday, December 9, Shared Hope International will release the Arizona Rapid Assessment, an evaluation of the state's response to victims of DMST. The Arizona Rapid Assessment reveals many recorded cases of children arrested for prostitution in the state.

- From 2005-2009, 136 juveniles were arrested for prostitution in Maricopa, Pima, Navajo, Yuma and Yavapai, rather than provided services as exploited victims
- Since, 2005, the Maricopa County Attorney's Office has tried more than 90 cases of traffickers/pimps but only five cases of buyers of sex with children
- The reported age of a sexually exploited child's entrance into prostitution in Phoenix is just under age 15

Shared Hope founder Linda Smith will be at the Historic Museum, available to discuss key findings and what they mean for the Arizona's children.

In addition to the Arizona Rapid Assessment, Shared Hope will soon release the Protected Innocence Initiative, starting in Arizona. The Protected Innocence Initiative sets the basic policy principles needed to keep our kids safe in every state across the United States; it includes an extensive legislative analysis of laws that protect children from commercial sexual exploitation in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The findings will culminate in a Report Card and letter grade of A, B, C, D or F given to each state that pinpoints adequacies and short-comings in the laws and provides key recommendations. Information about the Protected Innocence Initiative's [methodology](#) can be found on Shared Hope's Web site.

The Initiative is slated for kick-off in January 2011, with Report Card unveilings starting in Arizona—then Virginia and Washington state—with all 51 Report Cards announced by mid-2011. Linda Smith will publicly unveil the Protected Innocence Initiative Friday, December 10, at the National Conference of State Legislators Forum and Meeting of the Standing Committees.

Broken systems of response to victims must be fixed to ensure that DMST victims are treated as such and provided with resolution through the law to recapture their lives and their futures.

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**RAPID ASSESSMENT PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Topic: Findings of the Arizona Rapid Assessment**

**Dec. 9, 2010, 11:15am – 12:15pm**

**Historic Museum**

1300 N. College Avenue

Tempe, AZ 85281

**Speakers at the Press Conference Include:**

**Congresswoman (1994-1998) Linda Smith**, President and Founder of Shared Hope International

**Lucia Howard**, Attorney and Activist

**Chris Bray**, Sergeant, Phoenix Police Department

Individual interviews in Phoenix, for the Arizona Rapid Assessment, can be arranged immediately following the press conference on Dec. 9, 2010. Reporters who wish to schedule an interview with Linda Smith should contact Andrea Palombella at 312-752-8367.



**Advance Copies of Assessments and Video Footage:**

Shared Hope International has also secured undercover video footage and clips of victim interviews that reveal the realities of the commercial sex industry in the United States. Certain clips can be made available to the media through individual arrangement with Shared Hope International. For embargoed copies of the Arizona Rapid Assessment and media clips, contact Loren Wohlgemuth at 360-693-8100 or email [loren@sharedhope.org](mailto:loren@sharedhope.org)

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**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATORS FORUM & MEETING**

**Topic: Not for Sale: Ending the Trafficking of Children**

**Dec. 10, 2010, 10:00am – 11:30am**

**Arizona Biltmore**

2400 East Missouri Avenue

Phoenix, AZ 85016

**Panelists For the Human Trafficking Presentation Include:**

**Congresswoman (1994-1998) Linda Smith**, President and Founder of Shared Hope International

**Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles**, Washington

**Glenn Mucci**, Phoenix Police Department, Vice Enforcement Unit, Arizona

**Erin Otis**, Maricopa County Attorney's Office, Child Sexual Exploitation Bureau, Arizona

Linda Smith is available for interviews regarding the Initiative and its initial release in Arizona, after presenting from 10:00am-11:30am. To schedule an interview with Ms Smith, contact Andrea Palombella at 312-752-8637 or email [andrea@sharedhope.org](mailto:andrea@sharedhope.org). Media can register for the conference by going to <http://ecom.ncsl.org/meetings/registration.aspx>

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