



## Three AGs to receive Shared Hope International Pathbreaker Award

**Vancouver, WA**—Shared Hope International congratulates Attorneys General Greg Abbott (Texas), Martha Coakley (Massachusetts) and Rob McKenna (Washington), as recipients of the Pathbreaker Award, to be presented by SHI Founder and President, Congresswoman Linda Smith (U.S. Congress 1995-99).

Attorneys General Abbott, Coakley and McKenna were selected as Pathbreaker recipients because of their leadership in ensuring holistic responses to secure justice, rights and services for victims of child sex trafficking, and implement stiff penalties for buyers of commercial sex with minors. In addition, each attorney general has helped pass legislation packages that provide comprehensive responses to address all components of domestic minor sex trafficking. Generals Abbott, Coakley and McKenna will be presented with the Pathbreaker Award at a ceremony in San Antonio, Texas on November 30, 2011.

The Pathbreaker award recipients were selected from eleven attorneys general, nominated by service providers, activists and concerned citizens across the nation in recognition of their actions to provide a comprehensive legal framework to prevent domestic minor sex trafficking, and provide access to justice for those children exploited through the commercial sex industry. Generals Pam Bondi (Florida), Ken Cuccinelli (Virginia), Gary King (New Mexico), Lisa Madigan (Illinois), Sam Olens (Georgia), Bill Schuette (Michigan), William Sorrell (Vermont) and Greg Zoeller (IN) were also nominated for the Pathbreaker Award.

“As attorneys general, Greg Abbott, Martha Coakley and Rob McKenna have each demonstrated perseverance to ensure that anti-trafficking legislation is adopted in their state,” said Linda Smith. Additionally they have illustrated incredible commitment to ensure that a comprehensive set of laws address all aspects of the issue for prevention, prosecution and restoration. I congratulate these three leaders in their dedication to construct a robust response to prevent sex trafficking of America’s children.”

The Pathbreaker Award was initiated in 2003 to recognize pioneering individuals who fought for laws and response systems in countries identified by the U.S. Department of State as lagging behind in addressing trafficking in persons. With support from the U.S. Department of State, Shared Hope’s efforts to fight the sex trafficking of women and children around the world included raising the issue and providing guidance and direction to these country governments. As sex trafficking was revealed to be a growing threat in the U.S, Shared Hope found their efforts needed at home.

On December 1, Shared Hope International will release ground-breaking research under the **Protected Innocence Initiative**—a comprehensive strategy to respond to child sex trafficking in America in San Antonio. The Protected Innocence Challenge will expose the greatest and weakest state legislative frameworks in the release of 51 Protected Innocence Report Cards (50 states and Washington D.C.), grading state law as it impacts or relates to domestic minor sex trafficking.

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