

CRIME

# Iowa Secretary of State announces business coalition to combat human trafficking

Membership in Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking is open to any business or nonprofit in the state.



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Author: Mary Sugden, Renae Whissel  
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DES MOINES, Iowa — On Thursday, Secretary of State Paul Pate announced a new statewide coalition between businesses that he hopes will end human trafficking in Iowa.

Pate said several of the state's largest trade organizations have already joined Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT). Membership is open to any business or nonprofit that operates in the state and "shares a commitment to taking steps to promote awareness of human trafficking and the Iowa [Safe at Home](#) program," he said in a release.

Safe at Home is an address confidentiality program for survivors of human trafficking and other violent crimes.

Businesses that join IBAT are asked to "Learn Something" and "Do Something" each year. Pate said the "Learn Something" tasks involve educating employees, customers and industry partners on the signs and impact of human trafficking.

The "Do Something" tasks intend to empower more people to take action to prevent trafficking.

"Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery, and it must end," Pate said. "It affects thousands of people across the U.S., and it happens right here in Iowa. Whether it's a large corporation or a mom and pop store on Main Street with one employee, every business can join, and every business can make a difference."

**RELATED: [Effective Jan. 1, Iowa law will enhance training for hotel and lodging employees to spot human trafficking](#)**

Pate made the announcement at a ceremony with the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery.

George Belitsos, chair of the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery, said he was grateful to collaborate with Pate on the program.

"Secretary Pate is to be commended for launching IBAT and giving all of Iowa's businesses the opportunity to join the fight to end modern slavery and human trafficking in our state," Belitsos said.

Businesses can learn more about IBAT and apply for membership at [IBAT.iowa.gov](https://ibat.iowa.gov).

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