

Baptists seek to cover I-10 with prayer about human trafficking

September 23, 2011

If organizers have their way, Interstate 10 soon will be covered by more than cars from coast to coast.

A coalition of national Woman's Missionary Union, state WMU groups, anti-trafficking organizations, state Baptist conventions and churches are attempting to canvass the entire highway with prayer against human trafficking as well as for its victims.

The effort, dubbed, "10 at 10 for 10," encourages believers along the I-10 corridor to pray about human trafficking at 10 a.m. or 10 p.m. on the 10th of each month. The initiative will begin with a conference call Oct. 10.



The FBI has identified the I-10 corridor as the top path for trafficking in the nation, according to Tomi Grover, who leads the Texas Baptists-supported anti-trafficking organization [TraffickStop](#). More of I-10 is located in Texas than any other state, and more than 1,100 Texas Baptist churches are within 10 miles of the interstate where trafficking takes place.

"Prayer is the hard work when it comes to ministry of any kind, but in the arena of human trafficking, we tread into the devil's territory, and we must

pray for a God-sized solution to this massive problem," Grover said.

Carolyn Porterfield, Texas WMU multicultural specialist, said prayer is the first step in ministry. God works through prayer to guide people's thoughts, desires and actions to address an issue or particular situation. God can move people to resolve even the most complicated situations.

"Prayer is the first action needed in a strategy to address this evil," she said. "We must pray for God's heart in us to see what is in our midst. We need his direction to know how to engage to make a difference. With hearts shaped by God's compassion, we learn to pray for victims and their families. We must pray for those who serve in the judicial system and law enforcement. They are often understaffed and under re-sourced in this fight.

"This is a crime of economics. We must pray for those who demand a 'product' that is a human being. God can and will move on the hearts of those who buy and sell human beings as we pray. This cannot be a casual battle. The church cannot sit idly by while children, men and women are subjected to this degrading and devastating treatment."

This prayer initiative is one way WMU is attacking the trafficking issue. National WMU has launched [Project HELP: Human Exploitation](#), which focuses on education and action items regarding various aspects of exploitation including trafficking. Texas WMU has been involved in that effort and this fall will take a mission trip to Honduras to minister to youth who are at risk to become trafficking victims.

TraffickStop and Texas WMU are supported by gifts to the Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas Missions.

Kay Bennett, director of the [Baptist Friendship House in New Orleans](#)—an outreach that serves homeless women with children—recently prayer drove I-10 from Florida to New Orleans.

During the trip, each 18-wheeled truck became a possible hiding place for trafficking victims. Each rest stop was a potential place where trafficking victims would stop and hope for help. Every billboard became a possible location for anti-trafficking education efforts.

"As I traveled that, I guess I looked at it differently because I prayer drove it," she said.

For more information about the prayer effort, visit www.traffickstop.org/page/1010-for-i-10 or call Grover at 214-418-8318.