Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2014

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave NW Rm 5111
Washington DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder:

We are writing to ask you to take immediate action to combat human trafficking putting an end to Backpage.com's facilitation of the buying and selling of people, including young children. We cannot continue to allow websites like Backpage.com to profit from the unlawful exploitation of minors. We ask that you pursue and prosecute these grotesque actions and where laws are unclear or insufficient, provide recommendations to Congress.

Every year, tens of thousands of children are victims of sex trafficking in the United States. Not coincidentally, Backpage.com makes millions of dollars in profit annually from the fees charged for online advertisements, including essentially unchecked advertising of children for sex services.

In a July 23, 2013 letter to Members of Congress, the National Association of Attorneys General described a case where a man used Backpage.com to advertise sex services from a 13-year-old girl. He tattooed his name on her eyelids to mark her as his property. We must do more to stop this website and websites like it from acting as a medium for these activities. Waiting until more women, men, and children are victimized is unacceptable.

The U.S. Department of Justice must get serious about putting an end to Backpage.com's facilitation of the trafficking of children. Their profit from the forced exploitation of young children is disgusting and demands your immediate action. We ask for a response by March 31, 2014 detailing how your Department will take legal action against the website or give Congress concrete recommendations for legislation needed to give your Department the tools to do so.

As members of Congress committed to ending this horrific practice, we stand ready to make any necessary changes in the law to ensure that our children are protected.

Sincerely,

Kristi Noem
Member of Congress

Frank Wolf
Member of Congress

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

Edward R. Royce
Member of Congress

Renee Ellmers
Member of Congress

Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress

Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson
Member of Congress

Susan Brooks
Member of Congress

Randy Weber
Member of Congress

Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress

Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress

Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress

Peter J. Roskam
Member of Congress

Steve Southerland, II
Member of Congress

Doug Collins
Member of Congress

Ann Wagner
Member of Congress

Austin Scott
Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress

Tom Graves
Member of Congress

Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress

H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress

Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress

Erik Paulsen
Member of Congress

Kay Granger
Member of Congress

Paul A. Gosar
Member of Congress

Candice S. Miller
Member of Congress

Michele Bachmann
Member of Congress

Leonard Lance
Member of Congress

Rodney Davis
Member of Congress

Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

Dave Reichert
Member of Congress

Ted S. Yoho
Member of Congress

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress

J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress

Shelley Moore Capito
Member of Congress

Tim Walberg
Member of Congress

Robert Pittenger
Member of Congress

Mark Meadows
Member of Congress

Joe Heck, D.O.
Member of Congress

Sean P. Duffy
Member of Congress

Ted Poe
Member of Congress

Thomas J. Rooney
Member of Congress

George Holding
Member of Congress