



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **AMERICA'S SBDC IOWA Joins Statewide Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking Effort**

**AMES, Iowa** – America's SBDC Iowa announced today it has joined a statewide coalition to end human trafficking in Iowa. The Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT) initiative is spearheaded by the Iowa Secretary of State's Office. The goal is to have Iowa's business community raise awareness and help prevent human trafficking.

Membership in IBAT is open to any business or nonprofit organization that operates in the State of Iowa and shares a commitment to taking steps to promote awareness of human trafficking and the Iowa Safe at Home program. Safe at Home is an address confidentiality program for survivors of human trafficking and other violent crimes.

Businesses that join IBAT are asked to complete two tasks each year: "Learn Something," and "Do Something." Businesses will commit to "Learn Something" by educating employees, customers, and industry partners on the signs and impact of human trafficking in Iowa. Businesses can "Do Something" by empowering more people to take action to prevent human trafficking in Iowa.

"America's SBDC Iowa is honored to join the hundreds of Iowa businesses already registered in support of this critical initiative. Our organization will commit to doing our part and using our resources to raise awareness and help prevent human trafficking in our State. Additionally, we welcome the opportunity to assist any Iowa small business owners in registering to become IBAT certified. We hold our relationship with the Iowa Secretary of State's office in the highest regard and thank Secretary Pate for his leadership in combating human trafficking in Iowa," said Austin Strawhacker, America's SBDC Iowa Associate State Director.

IBAT was launched by Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate in January 2022. <https://ibat.iowa.gov/>

"I'm very pleased to have America's SBDC Iowa join the army we are building to combat human trafficking," Secretary Pate said. "By joining IBAT, they've shown a commitment to their community and helping others. Together, we can make a huge difference and become a model for the rest of the nation."

Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, America's SBDC Iowa has 15 regional assistance centers located strategically across the State. Since program inception in 1981, the SBDC has helped Iowa businesses and entrepreneurs through no fee, confidential, customized, professional business counseling and practical, affordable training workshops.

For more information on America's SBDC Iowa programs or services, call (515) 294-2030 or visit [www.iowasbdc.org](http://www.iowasbdc.org), <https://www.facebook.com/AmericasSBDCIowa>, or @IowaSBDC on Instagram and Twitter.



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