



PRESS RELEASE

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**Texas Advocacy Project Stands with Survivors in the Pursuit of Justice**

**AUSTIN, TEXAS, Feb. 6, 2025** — This week marks the resolution of a painful fight for justice for survivors of human trafficking. The **Office of the Attorney General of Texas** (OAG) took legal action against Adriana and Enrique Rodriguez, owners and operators of Austin Eco Bilingual School, alleging labor exploitation and abuse. Texas Advocacy Project (TAP) stepped in to support survivors, providing legal representation and Trauma-Informed Trial Prep services to ensure their voices were heard throughout the legal process. Although the case was settled financially, survivors continue to demand accountability and prevention. As one survivor expressed, "It is very important that [Adriana Rodriguez] does not continue harming people like she did with us."

**Another survivor described the profound and lasting toll of their ordeal:**

"My experiences were deeply painful, causing immense stress and anxiety. They affected me emotionally and psychologically, leaving lasting scars on both my life and my children's lives. The fear of retaliation, pain, frustration, and helplessness were overwhelming emotions that my children and I endured, and I continue to pray that God helps us find healing from this nightmare.

After 10 years of raising my voice, the wait finally ended. The OAG successfully secured a financial payment to the State from Adriana Rodriguez. I am deeply grateful to the entire AG office, all government agencies, my lawyers, and my family and friends for the unwavering support and assistance that my children and I received."

**TAP's Chief Legal Officer, Bronwyn Blake**, who represented survivors, emphasized their courage:

"These women are real heroes. Perpetrators prey on the most vulnerable. These survivors stepped forward despite immense fear for themselves and their families. They risked everything to assist in the pursuit of justice and were incredibly brave."

As part of TAP's representation, our attorneys provide survivors with **Trauma-Informed Trial Prep services**, ensuring they are legally and emotionally prepared for the litigation process. These services, funded in part by a grant from the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime, include preparing survivors to meet with prosecutors, assert their victims' rights, and handle depositions and cross-examinations. TAP can also ensure survivors have access to counseling and emotional support resources, helping them navigate the trauma associated with recounting their trauma in a legal setting. These independent services, protected by attorney-client privilege, reinforce TAP's survivor-centered approach.

Human trafficking remains a serious and pervasive issue in Texas. [According to research](#), approximately 234,000 individuals in Texas are victims of labor trafficking at any given time, resulting in an estimated \$600 million in lost wages. This case highlights the need for robust anti-trafficking measures and ongoing survivor support.

**Heather Bellino, TAP's Chief Executive Officer and a member of the Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force**, reinforced TAP's commitment to survivors:

"As Texans unite to combat human trafficking, it is crucial that survivors have strong legal support throughout the justice process. TAP stands beside them every step of the way, ensuring their voices are heard and their rights protected."

The **Compromise and Settlement Agreement** reached in this case acknowledges the serious allegations raised against Austin Eco Bilingual School, Adriana Rodriguez, and Enrique Rodriguez, while also underscoring the survivors' unwavering pursuit of justice. The settlement required a payment of \$250,000, equivalent in amount to what penalties under Texas Civil Practices and Remedies Code 140A for civil racketeering through labor trafficking would be, as alleged in the lawsuit. However, the Defendants denied all claims, and no admission of wrongdoing was made.

TAP commends **Attorney General Ken Paxton** and his office for taking decisive action against labor trafficking for those accused. His office's dedication to combating human trafficking sends a strong message that exploitation will not be tolerated in Texas.

Though this settlement ends a chapter, it does not erase the harm survivors endured. TAP remains committed to advocating for policies and legal actions that hold traffickers accountable and prevent future exploitation.

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**About Texas Advocacy Project:** Since its beginning in 1982 as a legal hotline, Texas Advocacy Project (TAP) has evolved into an expert on legal and social issues affecting survivors of power-based abuse. TAP strives to end dating and domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, stalking, and human trafficking in Texas. TAP empowers survivors through free legal and social services, as well as access to the justice system, and raises awareness through public outreach and education. Our attorneys, staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors are dedicated to our vision of a future where all Texans live free from abuse. In 2023, TAP helped 11,705 clients and their children across Texas. If you or someone you know needs help, call 800-374-HOPE or visit [TexasAdvocacyProject.org](https://TexasAdvocacyProject.org).

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