



Lynn Fitch
ATTORNEY GENERAL

January 5, 2023

Honorable Shad White
Mississippi State Auditor
Post Office Box 956
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0956

Re: Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund – FY 2022

Dear Auditor White,

House Bill 1559, enacted on July 8, 2020, established the “Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund” to be administered by the Attorney General’s Office. The bill further requires that my office “provide an itemized financial report to the Legislature and State Auditor of all expenditures, statistical data regarding services that have been provided, and a report of all service activity with geographical description.”

My Office has established the “Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund” in accordance with this legislation. The balance of the Fund at the close of Fiscal Year 2022 (June 30, 2022) totaled \$24,951.88. With the exception of \$35.38 in interest earned, this amount is solely attributable to assessments that have been paid to the Fund by criminal defendants and have been sent to the Fund by Mississippi’s court clerks. No monies were distributed from the Fund during FY 2022.

Though the funds were not received until FY 2023, the Legislature appropriated \$2.5 million to the Fund during the 2022 legislative session. In anticipation of distributing these funds, the Committee developed an application and evaluation process to award the \$2.5 million and, per the Fund’s Administrative Rules, appointed a 3-person independent evaluation panel to evaluate funding applications. We look forward to distributing this funding to fulfill the mission of the Fund and to sharing news of the services for trafficking victims that it sustains in our next report.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Anna Ward of my office, at anna.ward@ago.ms.gov or 769-234-0881.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Fitch".

Lynn Fitch
Attorney General
State of Mississippi