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The Honorable Harry Reid
U.S. Senate
528 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

We appreciate your calls yesterday to listen to our concerns regarding the polygamous communities of Colorado City, Ariz. and Hildale, Utah. We also appreciate your efforts to help secure a meeting with the U.S. Department of Justice for the both of us along with Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto. We would like to discuss how the federal government would be helpful with polygamy-related crimes, investigations and prosecutions. This meeting will be an important step for our continuing efforts to bring the Rule of Law to areas controlled by the Fundamentalist Church of Latter Day Saints (FLDS).

Your comments to Utah media about state law enforcement efforts with regard to women and children living in Colorado City and Hildale were apparently made without full information about the significant progress made in our two states over the past several years. We would like to take this opportunity to briefly summarize the successful efforts by Arizona and Utah in bringing justice to these communities and to protect victims of abuse.

In 1953, Arizona authorities conducted a raid of the polygamous community of Short Creek, now called Colorado City. Public sympathy went out to the over 200 children who were separated from their families and placed in state custody. After the cases were dismissed and the children returned to Colorado City, the raid was widely criticized, and partly as a result, the community was ignored by law enforcement and state government for almost 50 years. That ended in 2001 with the conviction of polygamist Tom Green for child rape and bigamy. In 2002 Utah launched investigations into crimes being committed against women and children in the name of religion. Hildale police officer Rodney Holm was charged with unlawful sexual relations with his 16-year old sister-in-law and bigamy for making her his third wife. One month after Holm's conviction in 2003, Warren Jeffs ordered the purchase of property in Texas and Colorado to escape criminal prosecutions. At the time, the marriage age in Texas was 14 years old.

Since 2003, important partnerships have been developed with local law enforcement in Arizona and Utah, the Arizona and Utah Attorney General's Offices, the FBI and several state agencies to undertake both civil and criminal investigations and provide a safety net for victims of child abuse and domestic violence. These efforts helped to ensure victims have access to services, regardless of which side of the Arizona-Utah border they live.

Over the last five years we have convened meetings of Arizona and Utah law enforcement, state and local service agencies, advocacy groups and members of the community to find better ways to protect victims of domestic violence and child abuse.

We have learned that outreach and support to victims must address the barriers unique to the polygamous communities such as geographic isolation, historical disputes with government, transportation barriers, lack of access to victim services and legal assistance.

As a result of this unprecedented partnership, significant progress has been made:

- A Safety Net program has been established increasing the presence of human services and law enforcement agencies from Arizona and Utah. In 2004, Arizona established the first State-County complex in Colorado City with offices and staff representing the Arizona Department of Economic Security's Child Protective Services and other public benefit programs along with the Mohave County Sheriff's Office, Mohave County Attorney's Office, Investigations and Victim Witness. These services are integrated with Utah state and county services based in St. George and Hurricane, Utah.
- Arizona and Utah collaborated in the development of a training curriculum (*The Polygamy Primer* and *The Safety Net Directory*) to help child protection professionals provide services to victims of domestic violence and child abuse from polygamous communities.
- Arizona and Utah have both established 24 hour toll-free helplines to provide outreach to child abuse and domestic violence victims. Arizona sponsored the Safe Talk Helpline (1-866-9-SAFE-99), which is answered by professional counselors at Childhelp USA, and promoted using billboards, bumper stickers, flyers and shoe cards. In Utah, the Domestic Violence Linkline coverage was expanded.
- We have worked with both the Arizona and Utah Legislatures to pass Child Bigamy statutes to give our states better tools to prosecute crimes that involve plural marriages of underage girls to much older men.
- Warren Jeffs, the prophet and leader of the FLDS, was indicted on child abuse charges in both Arizona and Utah. One of the FBI's 10 Most Wanted fugitives, Jeffs was arrested in Nevada in August 2006 following a two-year manhunt. In September 2007, he was convicted by a Washington County, Utah, jury of two counts of rape as an accomplice after ordering and performing an underage marriage in Caliente, Nevada.
- In February 2008, Jeffs was transferred to Kingman, Arizona, for a trial on similar charges in Arizona. Mohave County Attorney Matt Smith filed three separate and distinct cases involving a total of 10 felony counts against Mr. Jeffs of sexual abuse of a minor, incest and conspiracy to commit sexual abuse.
- Arizona and Utah POST continue to require that the Colorado City-Hildale Marshall's Office comply with the law and standard law enforcement protocols. Six Hildale and Colorado City police

officers have been removed from office and decertified for failing to report numerous cases of abuse, in addition to committing crimes, including bigamy. Similarly, the Utah Supreme Court removed a Justice of the Peace for not enforcing state law.

- In 2006, Mohave County Attorney Matt Smith secured eight indictments against a number of Jeffs' followers on charges of sexual abuse of a minor and conspiracy to commit sexual abuse. To date, six men have been convicted on these charges.
- Also two years ago, the Arizona Legislature adopted the Arizona School Receivership Law, a law motivated by the financial failure of the Colorado City School District. In December 2006, the Arizona Attorney General's Office asked the Arizona Board of Education to place the district into receivership on the first day the new law took effect. The Colorado City School District superintendent and board were removed and an independent receiver appointed.
- In 2006, the Utah Courts took the United Effort Plan Trust (with assets worth almost \$200 million) out of the control of Warren Jeffs. Our offices worked together to petition the Utah probate court to replace Jeffs and his associates, who were using Trust assets to reinforce their power over followers, with a special fiduciary who has been working to identify and protect the Trust's assets. Unfortunately, just prior to the court removing Jeffs' control over the Trust assets, he moved one of the most profitable companies, Western Precision, out of the Trust and out of Hildale to Las Vegas, Nevada where it continues to operate under a new name, New Era Manufacturing. This company generates substantial income to leaders in Texas. For the first time, the property in Colorado City and Hildale previously owned by the Trust, has been subdivided, and the special fiduciary is now working with area residents to allow them to assume ownership of their homes. This is a revolutionary idea in this region.

On May 8, we will be hosting the fourth annual Polygamy Town Hall in St. George, Utah. This public forum is an opportunity for the Colorado City/Hildale community to meet and discuss issues with state leaders. These forums have been vital to keeping channels of communication open with victim advocates and members of the communities.

These are positive steps and have brought significant changes in the previously isolated communities controlled by the FLDS, but we have a long way to go. Under Arizona and Utah laws, we cannot prosecute child abuse complaints unless we have an actual victim who is willing to testify. Many women and children are still afraid to testify against their abusers, and young men are probably still being forced to leave town on orders from Jeffs and other FLDS leaders.

More people in the Colorado City/Hildale area are reaching out for help. While the numbers may seem small, we have definitely opened a window to the outside world for them to seek help. Your comments earlier this week unfairly disparaged the men and women of law enforcement and protective services who have been working diligently over the last five years to bring justice to victims in Colorado City and Hildale.

Two years ago we met with the U.S. Department of Justice and asked for help and increased cooperation in investigating various federal violations, including Civil Rights complaints against the Colorado City Marshals and Internal Revenue violations. Your assistance in moving that request forward would be appreciated.


Utah recently reapplied to the U.S. Department of Justice - Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program seeking federal funding to assist domestic violence victims in the communities in Arizona and Utah. Additional funding and resources are critical to the protection of victims in Colorado City and Hildale. Your support for this grant would be valuable and appreciated.

We appreciate your willingness to review information about our efforts. We look forward to meeting with the U.S Department of Justice and would also like to have an opportunity to brief you more fully on what is happening in Colorado City/Hildale region and to share our concerns about happenings in Nevada.

We are restoring the Rule of Law in Colorado City/Hildale and coming to the aid of victims. The walls of tyranny are crumbling. For too long, Jeffs and his predecessors have ignored and violated the law. They demand absolute obedience from their followers. What has taken a century to build cannot be changed overnight. But step by step, we are making important changes.

Thank you for your consideration and willingness to help with our efforts.


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