



Demand Abolition Seeks to Abolish the Illegal Commercial Sex Industry in the United States by Eradicating the Demand for Purchased Sex

Hunt Alternatives Fund to host groundbreaking international conversation in Boston

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Boston, MA (April 26, 2012) - Recognizing that lasting social change is established through sustained efforts, **Demand Abolition, a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund**, has developed a multi-year, multi-stakeholder national strategy to eradicate sex trafficking by eliminating the demand for illegal commercial sex in the United States. Working closely with a strong network of criminal justice professionals, survivors, nongovernment organization leaders, policymakers, researchers, philanthropists, corporate leaders, media outlets, and activists, Demand Abolition is proud to host a groundbreaking event -- **“Arresting Demand: A National Colloquium” May 3-4 at the Westin Copley Place hotel in Boston.**

Notable speakers include **Mary Lou Leary, Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice; Martha Coakley, Massachusetts Attorney General; and Ed Davis, Boston Police Chief.**

“Our vision is of a cultural shift in the United States, and by extension the world, to a society that no longer tolerates the buying of human beings for sex,” says **Ambassador Swanee Hunt, Founder and Chair of Hunt Alternatives Fund.** “Organized crime needs organized action. At this colloquium we are sharing pragmatic ideas, giving and receiving technical assistance, and forming collaborations with old and new allies.”

More than 250 attendees from 27 states, the District of Columbia, and seven countries will participate in intensive panel discussions and workshops addressing an array of pragmatic solutions and sustainable models; including how to:

- draft demand-focused provisions for legislation and increase prosecutions of buyers of illegal commercial sex;
- harness media and social networking to transform their community’s dialogue; and
- create prevention education curricula and execute and finance successful public awareness campaigns.

The two-day agenda highlights the growing trend for tackling the demand for illegal sex. A recent landscape assessment found that criminal justice tactics, public awareness campaigns, and prevention education are being widely used. In fact, **“Arresting Demand: A National Colloquium” comes on the heels of recently passed Massachusetts anti-trafficking legislation. Marking the strictest demand provisions in the country, the law mandates increased fines and imprisonments of buyers.**

Given the range of initiatives, Hunt Alternatives Fund recognized the critical need to convene key players across systems and disciplines, in order to learn from the challenges and successes of existing and emerging practices. “More than 60 criminal justice professionals, representing 15 states and 21 jurisdictions will attend the colloquium,” offers Lina Nealon, Director of Demand Abolition. “These professionals have told us that their work is enormously affected by political will, which in turn, is greatly influenced by the media, religious communities, and research. Through the colloquium, we will amplify the need for increased high level support and advocacy in order to abate the exploitation of our society’s most vulnerable individuals.”

About Demand Abolition|

Demand Abolition seeks to abolish the illegal commercial sex industry in the United States by eradicating the demand for purchased sex. Conducting and disseminating research, training and consulting with criminal justice professionals, educating policymakers, and convening key stakeholders, Demand Abolition is catalyzing social change to reflect the dignity of all people.

About Hunt Alternatives Fund

Hunt Alternatives Fund advances innovative and inclusive approaches to social change at local, national, and global levels. The Fund was established in 1981 in Denver, Colorado by Helen and Swanee Hunt as a private foundation to provide grants and technical assistance in the field of human service. In 1993, Helen formed The Sister Fund in New York to pursue her own philanthropic work. Since its founding, the Fund has contributed nearly \$90 million to social change through a blend of grant making and operating programs.

Today, the Fund operates out of Cambridge, Massachusetts and is focused on advocating for the full inclusion of all stakeholders in peace and security processes around the world, combating the demand for modern-day slavery, inspiring women to political leadership, supporting leaders of social movements across the country, strengthening youth arts organizations in Eastern Massachusetts, and encouraging current and future donors to unleash their philanthropic potential.

Media Contacts:

Christian Megliola, Regan Communications 617.488.2862

Sean Flanagan, Regan Communications 617.488.2878