



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 25, 2025

Chair Grayber & Members of the Committee,

I wanted to follow up on yesterday's public hearing on [House Bill 2425](#). During the hearing, there was significant conversation around which US agency is tasked with certifying that cobalt and other heavy metals are not sourced by child labor. It was pointed out by several members of this committee that it is USAID. Based on my research, the [Bureau of International Labor Affairs](#) within the U.S. Department of Labor, under the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is the entity that *for more than 25 years* has been a leader in reducing child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking worldwide. They also work to safeguard dignity at work by helping to ensure that other countries meet international labor standards.

The [Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking \(OCFT\)](#) consists of the following divisions:

- **TAC:** The Technical Assistance and Cooperation (TAC) unit currently manages an active portfolio of approximately 50 technical cooperation projects to **combat child labor** and forced labor around the world.
- **MERL:** The Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) Division's research-related activities, conducted primarily through cooperative agreements, include: **child labor prevalence surveys**; formative research on the measurement of forced labor and human trafficking; and impact evaluations to assess the **effectiveness of a variety of interventions in reducing child labor**, forced labor, and human trafficking.
- **R&P:** The Research and Policy (R&P) Unit produces important data on child labor, forced labor and human trafficking and makes it accessible to the U.S. government, foreign governments, NGOs, businesses, and other organizations working to tackle these serious violations of human rights.

In addition, ILAB publishes three reports on international child labor and forced labor that serve as valuable resources for research, advocacy, government action and corporate responsibility. These reports are The Department of Labor's Findings on:

- [The Worst Forms of Child Labor](#);
- [The List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor](#);
- [The List of Products Produced by Forced or Indentured Child Labor](#).

With all of this being said, I understand USAID funds or partially funds other organizations that track child labor or forced labor, but from the information I have found, I do not believe they are the *lead* agency on this issue, nor are they producing the data we rely on for government action/corporate responsibility.

Thank you,

Lucetta Elmer