

H.R. 1732 Strengthening the Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act

Sponsored by Representatives Karen R. Bass (D-CA) & Tom Marino (R-PA)

ISSUE

According to a recent study by the Department of Justice, an estimated 293,000 young people are at-risk for being trafficked specifically for the sex trade. Our nation's foster youth are particularly vulnerable.

Alarming statistics are emerging from select jurisdictions across the country:

- **Connecticut (2012):** 98% of child victims of sex trafficking were child welfare involved, and most reported abuse while in foster care or group homes
- **California (2011):** Los Angeles County Probation Department reported that 59% of victims of trafficking under their supervision had been foster youth. In Alameda County, 55% of victims were from foster youth group homes
- **New York State (2007):** 85% of identified child sex trafficking victims had contact with the child welfare system
- **Florida:** FBI estimates that 70% of victims were child welfare involved

Yet few child welfare employees have been adequately trained or prepared to respond to child victims of trafficking, and fewer still have incorporated policies, protocols, and case management techniques to serve this population appropriately.

SOLUTION

Ensure that child welfare agencies have the tools to understand the unique needs of child victims of human trafficking and the resources to appropriately serve them.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill will strengthen the child welfare response to child trafficking by:

1. Providing child welfare employees with appropriate tools to identify, document, educate, and counsel child victims of trafficking and those at-risk; and
2. Requiring States to report numbers of victims of trafficking as well as their current procedures & policies to combat trafficking to the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Congressional Budget Office has indicated no direct costs are associated with this bill.

STATUS

The bill was introduced by 14 bipartisan Members of Congress on April 25, 2013. It was referred to the House Ways & Means and the Education & the Workforce Committees. The authors are currently seeking additional cosponsors.

SUPPORTED BY

Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST), End Child Pornography and Trafficking (ECPAT International), Coalition Against Slavery and Trafficking (CAST), Shared Hope International. This is a partial list. Full list of endorsers available upon request.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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