

Youth for Human Rights Pledges Grassroots Support for International Anti-Sex Trafficking Initiative in 2020

The Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act is a bipartisan initiative that combats the demand that inevitably leads to human trafficking and even sex "tourism"

WASHINGTON, DC, US, January 2, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Youth for Human Rights](#) National Office announced today its pledge to activate grassroots support through its U.S. chapters to help prevent global [human trafficking](#) through the Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act (HR 4326) introduced by Representatives [Ann Wagner](#) (R-MO-02) and [Hakeem Jeffries](#) (D-NY-08).

Representatives Wagner and Jeffries released the following statements after they introduced the bill proposing an amendment of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to reduce demand for commercial sex acts under the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.



Youth for Human Rights chapter from a Florida school advocating for human rights

“

We need to change the way society responds to sex trafficking and change the culture to stop promoting that it is acceptable to buy sex from people who are mostly victims of sex trafficking”

Erica Rodgers, Director for Youth for Human Rights National Office in DC

“Combating sex trafficking requires an all-of-the-above approach that fights not just the pimps who sell trafficking victims, but also the buyers who choose to exploit victims. Criminalizing the purchase of commercial sex acts and ending illegal sex ‘tourism’ are key to reducing the demand for trafficking victims and eliminating the worldwide sex trafficking trade.” Rep. Ann Wagner (R-MO-02)

“Sex trafficking is a heinous human rights violation that affects more than 4.5 million victims across the globe. The bipartisan Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act aims to prevent the global demand for commercial sex and sex tourism in order to reduce the number of trafficking victims. Rep. Wagner should be commended for her commitment in this regard.” Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY-

08)

According to the Department of Homeland Security, human trafficking is “modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act.” The victims of this crime in the U.S. are men and women, adults and children, foreign nationals and U.S. citizens. Victims are of all genders, ages, races, countries, socioeconomic

statuses, etc.

The Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act would work to reduce demand for participation in international sex tourism by increasing awareness and educating potential buyers of commercial sex and how traffickers exploit prostituted persons. The intention is to prohibit the purchase of commercial sex acts by penalizing countries that allow human trafficking to go on without consequence by labeling the countries with poor grades in the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report.

"We need to change the way society responds to sex trafficking and change the culture to stop promoting that it is acceptable to buy sex from people who are mostly victims of sex trafficking," Erica Rodgers, Director for Youth for Human Rights International National Office in Washington, DC, stated. "This piece of legislation has the potential to dramatically reduce human trafficking in the U.S. and world wide by appropriately punishing buyers of commercial sex from victims of trafficking."

Youth for Human Rights is also encouraging other human rights groups and advocacy groups who work to reduce human trafficking to support Representatives Wagner and Jeffries in gaining more cosponsors for the Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act.

Current cosponsors on the bill are:

Rep. Hakeem S. Jeffries (D-NY)
Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ)
Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI)
Rep. Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen (R-American Samoa)
Rep. Paul Cook (R-CA)
Rep. Ross Spano (R-FL)
Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-WI)
Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA)
Rep. Jefferson Van Drew (D-NJ)
Rep. Max Rose (D-NY)
Rep. Cynthia Axne (D-IA)
Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA)
Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL)
Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, JR (D-GA)



Youth for Human Rights members from Oregon visiting the Oregon Congressional offices



Youth for Human Rights advocates at the U.S. Congress for a "Hill Day" doing Congressional visits to support anti-trafficking legislation

About Youth for Human Rights:

Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to teach youth about human rights, specifically the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and inspire them to become valuable advocates for tolerance and peace. YHRI teaches human rights education both in the classroom and in nontraditional educational settings such as through art series, concerts and other interactive community events, including regional and international human rights summits bringing youth together from across whole sectors of the world. Their most recent campaign has included #KnowYour30 with the deliberate purpose of increasing awareness of the 30 human rights every person has -- and how they are a part of everyday life. To learn more go to

<https://www.youthforhumanrights.org>
or watch a documentary on how Youth for Human Rights began.
(<https://www.scientology.tv/series/voices-for-humanity/mary-shuttleworth.html>)

COPY OF THE BILL:

116th CONGRESS
1st Session
H. R. 4326

To amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 relating to determinations with respect to efforts of foreign countries to reduce demand for commercial sex acts under the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.



Youth for Human Rights Advocates visiting Members of Congress in support of human trafficking legislation



Youth for Human Rights advocate from New York visiting office of Senator Kristen Gillibrand

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

September 12, 2019

Mrs. Wagner (for herself, Mr. Jeffries, Mr. Smith of New Jersey, and Mr. Walberg) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 relating to determinations with respect to efforts of foreign countries to reduce demand for commercial sex acts under the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ``Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

- (1) It has been the longstanding position of the United States to reduce the demand for sex trafficking victims. There is also a wide international consensus on the necessity of demand reduction in order to prevent human trafficking.
- (2) The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000 (also referred to as the ``Palermo Protocol(s)'') expressly addresses the requirement that nations make serious efforts to reduce demand for trafficked persons.
- (3) Article 9, addressing prevention of human trafficking, specifically directs that, ``States Parties shall adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or cultural measures, including through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking.''.
- (4) The United Nations Protocol, the Europe Convention on Action against Human Trafficking, and the 2011 European Union Directive of the European Parliament and the Council on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings also specifically address the need to prevent human trafficking by reducing demand for trafficking victims.
- (5) Research has shown that legal prostitution increases the demand for prostituted persons and thus increases the market for sex. As a result, there is a significant increase in instances of human trafficking.
- (6) In 2012, researchers Seo-Young Cho, Axel Dreher, and Eric Neumayer published their findings in World Development

establishing that, ``The scale effect of legalized prostitution leads to an expansion of the prostitution market, increasing human trafficking On average, countries where prostitution is legal experience larger reported human trafficking inflows.".

(7) In 2005, a study focused on 11 European Union countries requested by the European Parliament's committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and performed by Transcrime found that stricter prostitution laws are correlated with fewer human trafficking victims.

(8) Case studies published by researchers Niklas Jakobsson and Andreas Kotsadam support the possibility of a causal link between harsher prostitution laws and reduced human trafficking. Jakobsson and Kotsadam found that trafficking of persons for commercial sexual exploitation is least prevalent in countries where prostitution is illegal and most prevalent in countries where prostitution is legalized.

(9) Further data has demonstrated the correlation between the adoption of legislation that criminalizes demand and reductions in sex trafficking.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENT RELATING TO DETERMINATIONS WITH RESPECT TO EFFORTS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO REDUCE DEMAND FOR COMMERCIAL SEX ACTS UNDER THE MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF TRAFFICKING.

(a) In General.--Paragraph (12) of section 108(b) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7106(b)) is amended to read as follows:

``(12) Whether the government of the country has made serious and sustained efforts to--

``(A) prohibit the purchase of commercial sex acts to the extent such prohibition is within the authority of the central government or implement a policy against the purchase of commercial sex acts to the extent that prohibition is not within the authority of the central government;

``(B) educate buyers of commercial sex on how traffickers exploit prostituted persons for human trafficking; and

``(C) reduce demand for participation in international sex tourism by nationals of the country.".

(b) Effective Date.--The amendment made by subsection (a) takes effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and applies with respect to determinations under subsection (a)(4) of section 108 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 that are made on or after such date of enactment.

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