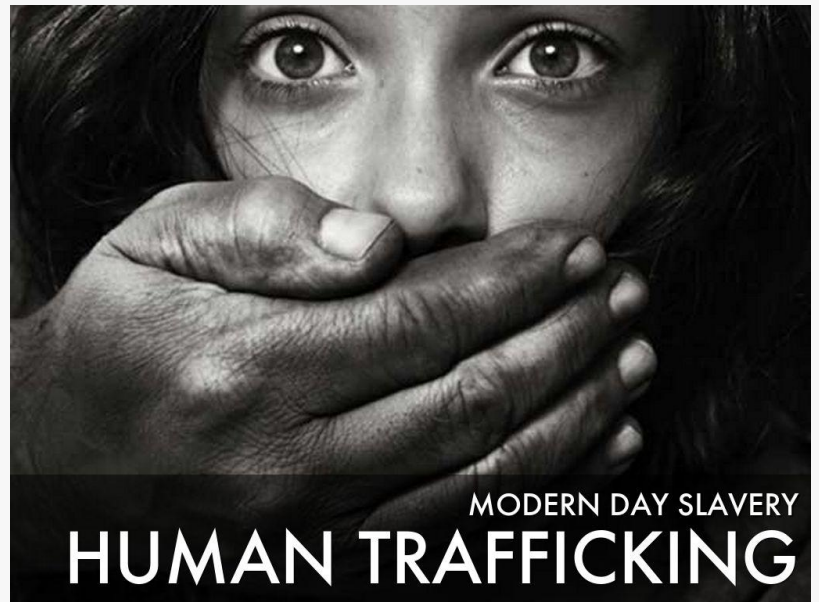


# Bills supporting anti-human-trafficking training, improved legal protection for victims, now on President's desk

*Human Rights group says bills will help train police, prosecutors, and give judges leeway to consider trafficking, extenuating circumstances at sentencing.*

WASHINGTON, DC, US, January 4, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Youth for Human Rights praised Congress today for their bipartisan work to pass legislation which will help trafficking victims while also supporting the training of police and social workers in spotting and helping human-trafficking survivors. Congress just passed two bills which expand the resources available for human-trafficking survivors. The bills are now on the President's desk for signature and expected to be signed this week.



Anyone can help report human trafficking. Contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH), call 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733). (Photo sourced from Department of Homeland Security)

Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Chuck Grassley (R-IA) cosponsored the [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2022](#). This bill extends grants for victims' services programs, promotes additional screening of human trafficking victims, and will enhance training for federal investigators.

Additional training for federal investigators is critical as more understanding of sex-trafficking survivors' actions and demeanor is important. For instance, many trafficking survivors are so intimidated that they appear subdued and frightened of the police. Such are taken as clues in some police training that suggest guilt and police are trained to further interrogate the suspects. Trafficking victims will often admit to anything they are accused of to avoid punishment and torture, which they may have experienced at the hands of traffickers. Thus, trafficking victims have often been prosecuted for crimes they did not commit, were forced to commit or merely witnessed being committed by their traffickers. This bill will provide funding to train investigators

to consider trafficking when investigating other crimes.

Concurrent with the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and John Cornyn (R-TX) were the original sponsors and authors of the [Abolish Trafficking Reauthorization Act of 2022](#) which passed on the same day. This bill would reform current standards for victims of child sex crimes who have later been prosecuted in the adult criminal justice system for crimes they may have committed or been forced to commit. The bill would allow judges to refer cases to juvenile court and ensures protection for human trafficking survivors.



Sylvia Stanard speaking at an event in Congress promoting better training and handling of trafficking victims in the criminal justice arena

Both bills provide the legal framework to combat and prosecute human trafficking crimes while addressing the way children who have experienced trauma due to being trafficked are treated in the criminal justice system.

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Some cases have also involved trafficking survivors fighting off their attacker/trafficker and then being charged as an adult for murder or attempted murder.”

*Sylvia Stanard, Youth for Human Rights International, Washington, DC*

Child sex crime victims sometimes commit offenses against their abusers and these bills require judges to consider trafficking issues and would also require the review of diminished culpability of children relative to adults during sentencing.

Youth for Human Rights International has advocated for more awareness and training to combat human trafficking for many years. The organization supported these bills

and urged Congress to pass the legislation. Despite pessimistic outlooks on passing bipartisan legislation, as one of the last acts of the 117th Congress it did agree on this issue and passed these two bills to help survivors deal with legal issues

Sylvia Stanard, speaking for Youth for Human Rights DC, said, “As minors, many of these victims of traffickers are forced to commit crimes on behalf of their traffickers. Some cases have also involved trafficking survivors fighting off their attacker/trafficker and then being charged as an adult for murder or attempted murder. The fact of being trafficked or being assaulted and protecting themselves has often been ignored by judges or prosecutors. These two bills will help

to correct that problem with more training of police and prosecutors as well as giving judges more leeway in considering trafficking and extenuating circumstances at sentencing.”

Youth for Human Rights International joined with dozens of other human rights groups, child protective groups, and human trafficking survivor organizations in urging the passage of this legislation to help trafficking survivors.

Youth for Human Rights International has been working to prevent human trafficking on a national and international level for well over a decade. Raising awareness of human rights is the necessary undercut to this and so many other human rights issues. Article 4 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) states: “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.” To read all of the human rights as listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights go to: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights>

Online training and events on trafficking done by Youth for Human Rights International has included speakers from Airline Ambassadors, the Mexico Coalition against Trafficking, Karana Rising, and other anti-trafficking organizations. For information on the signs of trafficking go to: <https://www.youthforhumanrights.org/voices-for-human-rights/human-rights-abuses/human-rights-trafficking-awareness.html>

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 to inspire them to become valuable advocates for tolerance and peace. YHRI advocates for human rights 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 which bring 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 about human rights go to <https://www.youthforhumanrights.org>. For a documentary on Youth for Human Rights and its



Sylvia Stanard doing Congressional visits to promote better human trafficking programs and legislation

founder, go to

<https://www.scientology.tv/series/voices-for-humanity/mary-shuttleworth.html>.

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"What Are Human Rights?" educational booklet provided free of charge by Youth for Human Rights International



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