

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1185

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the implementation of curricula for training students, teachers, and school personnel to understand, recognize, prevent, and respond to signs of human trafficking and exploitation in children and youth, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 11, 2025

Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the implementation of curricula for training students, teachers, and school personnel to understand, recognize, prevent, and respond to signs of human trafficking and exploitation in children and youth, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Human Trafficking
5 and Exploitation Prevention Training Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) According to the National Human Traf-
4 ficking Hotline, operated by the National Human
5 Trafficking Resource Center, there is no single pro-
6 file for trafficking survivors—trafficking survivors
7 include adults and minors from rural, suburban, and
8 urban communities across the country. Survivors of
9 human trafficking have diverse socioeconomic back-
10 grounds, varied levels of education, and may be doc-
11 umented or undocumented. According to the 2018
12 Trafficking In Persons Report produced by the De-
13 partment of State, the Department of Justice, the
14 National Human Trafficking Resource Center, and
15 Youth.gov, vulnerable populations and risk factors
16 for human trafficking include—

17 (A) children in the child welfare and juve-
18 nile justice systems;

19 (B) runaway youth;

20 (C) homeless youth;

21 (D) youth forced to leave home by parents
22 or caregivers with no alternate care arranged;

23 (E) unaccompanied children;

24 (F) American Indians and Alaska Natives;

- 1 (G) migrant laborers, including undocu-
2 mented workers and individuals with temporary
3 visas;
- 4 (H) recent migration or relocation;
- 5 (I) persons with disabilities;
- 6 (J) LGBTI individuals;
- 7 (K) people of color;
- 8 (L) those with limited-English proficiency;
- 9 (M) low literacy;
- 10 (N) substance abuse;
- 11 (O) mental health issues;
- 12 (P) past trauma or violence;
- 13 (Q) stigma or discrimination;
- 14 (R) family conflict, disruption, or dysfunc-
15 tion;
- 16 (S) community-level risk factors such as
17 peer pressure, social norms, social isolation,
18 gang involvement, and living in an under-
19 resourced school, neighborhood, or community;
20 and
- 21 (T) society-level risk factors such as lack
22 of awareness of commercial exploitation and
23 human trafficking, sexualization of children,
24 and lack of resources.

1 (2) According to the National Human Traf-
2 ficking Resource Center, human trafficking survivors
3 have been identified in cities, suburbs, and rural
4 areas in all 50 States, and in Washington, DC. The
5 3 States with the highest incidents of human traf-
6 ficking cases reported via phone calls, emails, and
7 online tips to the National Human Trafficking Hot-
8 line in 2018 were California, Texas, and Florida, re-
9 spectively.

10 (3) According to the National Human Traf-
11 ficking Resource Center, the top recruitment meth-
12 ods used by sex traffickers based on self-reported
13 data from survivors involve an intimate partner or
14 marriage proposition, family members, individuals
15 posing as a benefactor, offers of employment, or in-
16 dividuals perpetrating fraud or offering false prom-
17 ises.

18 (4) According to the National Center on Safe
19 Supportive Learning Environments, traffickers may
20 systematically target vulnerable children by fre-
21 quenting locations where children congregate—malls,
22 schools, bus and train stations, and group homes,
23 among other locations. Traffickers also use peers or
24 classmates who befriend the target and slowly groom
25 the child for the trafficker by bringing the child

1 along to parties and other activities. According to
2 Common Sense Media, nearly all children age 8 and
3 under live in a home with some type of mobile device
4 and use it every day. This is especially concerning
5 given that traffickers often recruit through social
6 media platforms and other websites.

7 (5) Those within vulnerable populations are
8 often exploited or groomed for entry into human
9 trafficking at a very young age. According to a 2005
10 clinical report, “The Evaluation of Sexual Abuse in
11 Children”, published by the American Academy of
12 Pediatrics, studies have suggested that each year ap-
13 proximately 739,000 children experience some form
14 of sexual abuse, resulting in the sexual victimization
15 of 12 percent to 25 percent of girls and 8 percent
16 to 10 percent of boys before the age of 18.

17 (6) Sex trafficking and exploitation can take
18 many harmful forms, including a lesser-known but
19 just as damaging form of uncoerced exploitation re-
20 ferred to as “survival sex”, meaning the exchange of
21 sex for basic needs including clothing, food, shelter,
22 or other basic necessities. Survival sex does not in-
23 volve a third-party trafficker or exploiter, and often
24 affects youth, including those who are homeless,
25 runaways, or housing-insecure, who lack the finan-

1 cial resources, job readiness, support system, or op-
2 portunity to afford or access these basic necessities.

3 (7) Training students, teachers, and school per-
4 sonnel to understand, recognize, and respond to
5 signs of human trafficking and exploitation in chil-
6 dren and youth is invaluable in the effort to identify
7 and prevent human trafficking and exploitation be-
8 fore it occurs. According to the National Human
9 Trafficking Resource Center, the widespread lack of
10 awareness and understanding of human trafficking
11 leads to low levels of survivor identification by the
12 people who most often encounter them. Survivors of
13 human trafficking are often forced to work or pro-
14 vide commercial sex against their will in legal and le-
15 gitimate business settings or underground markets.
16 It is often the case that those who are being ex-
17 ploited or trafficked are in plain view and may inter-
18 act with community members, underscoring the ur-
19 gent need for the expansion of training programs to
20 increase awareness and prevention activities in com-
21 munities across the United States.

1 **SEC. 3. DEMONSTRATION PROJECT TO TRAIN STUDENTS,**
2 **TEACHERS, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO UN-**
3 **DERSTAND, RECOGNIZE, PREVENT, AND RE-**
4 **SPOND TO SIGNS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**
5 **AND CHILD EXPLOITATION.**

6 Section 582 of the Public Health Service Act (42
7 U.S.C. 290hh–1) is amended—

8 (1) by redesignating subsections (j) and (k) as
9 subsections (k) and (l), respectively;

10 (2) by inserting after subsection (i) the fol-
11 lowing:

12 “(j) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT TO TRAIN STU-
13 DENTS, TEACHERS, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO UN-
14 DERSTAND, RECOGNIZE, PREVENT, AND RESPOND TO
15 SIGNS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND CHILD EXPLOI-
16 TATION.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office
18 on Trafficking in Persons of the Administration for
19 Children and Families (in this subsection referred to
20 as the ‘Director’) shall carry out a demonstration
21 project for training students, teachers, and school
22 personnel at elementary schools and secondary
23 schools to understand, recognize, prevent, and re-
24 spond to signs of human trafficking and exploitation
25 in children and youth.

1 “(2) PROJECT ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the
2 demonstration project under this subsection, the Di-
3 rector shall—

4 “(A) approve vendors pursuant to para-
5 graph (3);

6 “(B) award grants pursuant to paragraph
7 (4);

8 “(C) develop a reliable methodology for
9 vendors and grantees to collect, and report to
10 the Director, in a manner that prevents disclo-
11 sure of individually identifiable information con-
12 sistent with all applicable privacy laws and reg-
13 ulations, data on the number of human traf-
14 ficking survivors identified and served pursuant
15 to this subsection, the number of students in el-
16 elementary school or secondary school identified
17 as being at risk of being trafficked or exploited,
18 and the demographics of such survivors and
19 students at risk; and

20 “(D) assist entities that are eligible for
21 grants under paragraph (4) in developing prop-
22 er protocols and procedures to—

23 “(i) work with law enforcement to re-
24 port, and facilitate communication with,

1 human trafficking survivors and exploited
2 children; and

3 “(ii) refer human trafficking survivors
4 and exploited children to appropriate social
5 or survivor service agencies or organiza-
6 tions.

7 “(3) VENDORS.—

8 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the
9 demonstration project under this subsection,
10 the Director shall approve a list of nonprofit or-
11 ganizations as verified vendors—

12 “(i) to develop or make available cur-
13 ricula for the training described in para-
14 graph (1); and

15 “(ii) to implement such training in ac-
16 cordance with such curricula.

17 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In approving
18 vendors under this subsection, the Director
19 shall give consideration to whether the non-
20 profit organization—

21 “(i) engages stakeholders, including
22 survivors of human trafficking, and Fed-
23 eral, State, local, and Tribal partners, to
24 develop the curricula; and

1 “(ii) has a demonstrated expertise
2 in—

3 “(I) developing human traf-
4 ficking and exploitation prevention
5 curricula for students, teachers, or
6 school personnel in elementary school
7 and secondary school that is—

8 “(aa) age-appropriate;

9 “(bb) culturally competent;

10 “(cc) evidence based;

11 “(dd) validated by university
12 research partners;

13 “(ee) inclusive of K–12 stu-
14 dents;

15 “(ff) adaptive to all regions;

16 “(gg) inclusive of all chil-
17 dren; and

18 “(hh) based on vetted and
19 proven materials that have been
20 tested over a 3-year run of suc-
21 cess;

22 “(II) training students, teachers,
23 or school personnel in identification
24 and proper response to human traf-

1 ficking described in paragraph (1);
2 and

3 “(III) creating a scalable, repeat-
4 able ‘Train the Trainer’ program (de-
5 fined as a program that trains in-
6 structors who can teach material to
7 other instructors) that employs appro-
8 priate technology tools and methodolo-
9 gies, including measurement and
10 training curricula.

11 “(4) GRANTS.—

12 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the
13 demonstration project under this subsection,
14 the Director shall award grants to eligible enti-
15 ties to implement the training described in
16 paragraph (1) in accordance with the curricula
17 developed and made available by verified ven-
18 dors pursuant to paragraph (3).

19 “(B) DIVERSITY OF GRANTS.—In award-
20 ing grants under this subsection, the Director
21 shall—

22 “(i) consult with the Director of the
23 Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Adminis-
24 trator for the Office of Juvenile Justice
25 and Delinquency Prevention, the Director

1 of the Office for Victims of Crime, and the
2 head of the Office of Partnership and En-
3 gagement of the Department of Homeland
4 Security to identify the geographic areas in
5 the United States with the highest preva-
6 lence of reported human trafficking in-
7 stances for children, aged 5 through 17;

8 “(ii) consult, as appropriate, with the
9 Secretary of Education, the Secretary of
10 Housing and Urban Development, the Sec-
11 retary of Labor, and the Attorney General
12 of the United States to identify the geo-
13 graphic areas in the United States with
14 the highest prevalence of at risk, vulner-
15 able, or underserved populations, including
16 homeless youth, foster youth, youth in-
17 volved in the child welfare system, and
18 runaways; and

19 “(iii) give priority to eligible entities
20 located in, or primarily serving, one or
21 more areas identified pursuant to clause (i)
22 or (ii).

23 “(C) ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDING.—

24 The Director shall ensure that all grant funds

1 under this subsection are awarded to applicants
2 who serve K–12 students.

3 “(D) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the
4 term ‘eligible entity’ includes a nonprofit orga-
5 nization, an elementary school, a local edu-
6 cational agency, a secondary school, and a State
7 educational agency.

8 “(5) DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING.—

9 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall
10 collect, and report to the Congress, data on the
11 following:

12 “(i) The total number of entities that
13 received a grant under this subsection.

14 “(ii) The total number of elementary
15 and secondary schools that established
16 proper protocols and procedures through
17 program development.

18 “(iii) The total number and geo-
19 graphic distribution of students, teachers,
20 and school personnel trained pursuant to
21 this subsection.

22 “(iv) The results of pretraining and
23 posttraining surveys to gauge increased
24 understanding and recognition of signs of

1 human trafficking and exploitation in chil-
2 dren and youth.

3 “(v) The number of human trafficking
4 survivors and exploited children identified
5 and served by vendors and grantees under
6 this subsection, excluding any individually
7 identifiable information about such sur-
8 vivors and children.

9 “(vi) The number of students in ele-
10 mentary school or secondary school identi-
11 fied by vendors and grantees under this
12 subsection as being at risk of being traf-
13 ficked or exploited, excluding any individ-
14 ually identifiable information about such
15 survivors.

16 “(vii) The demographics of human
17 trafficking survivors, exploited children,
18 and students at risk of being trafficked or
19 exploited described in clauses (v) and (vi),
20 excluding any individually identifiable in-
21 formation about such survivors, children,
22 and students.

23 “(viii) Any best practices identified by
24 the grantees under this subsection.

1 “(B) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Director
2 shall—

3 “(i) submit a report under subpara-
4 graph (A) not later than 1 year after the
5 date of enactment of this subsection and
6 annually thereafter; and

7 “(ii) prepare and submit each such re-
8 port in a manner that prevents the disclo-
9 sure of individually identifiable information
10 consistent with all applicable privacy laws
11 and regulations.

12 “(6) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

13 “(A) The terms ‘elementary school’, ‘local
14 educational agency’, ‘middle grades’, ‘secondary
15 school’, and ‘State educational agency’ have the
16 meanings given to those terms in section 8101
17 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
18 Act of 1965.

19 “(B) The term ‘school personnel’ includes
20 school resource officers, school nurses, school
21 counselors, school principals, school administra-
22 tors, and other school leadership.”; and

23 (3) in subsection (k) (authorizing appropria-
24 tions), as redesignated by paragraph (1)—

1 (A) by striking “There is authorized to be
2 appropriated to carry out this section” and in-
3 serting the following:

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
5 appropriated to carry out this section (other than
6 subsection (j))”; and

7 (B) by adding at the end the following:

8 “(2) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FUNDING.—
9 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
10 subsection (j) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years
11 2026 through 2029.”.

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