

children, and men are forced or tricked into lives of utter misery—into prostitution, sweatshop work, domestic or farm labor, or debt bondage. This is slavery, plain and simple. And it's not just something that happens far from our shores. In fact, each year as many as 50,000 people are brought to the United States for this cruel purpose. We must do our part to stop those responsible for these crimes and to help their victims.

The bill I'm signing will help to do that. It establishes the first Federal law that specifically targets this problem, setting out harsh penalties for those who trade in human beings, requiring convicted traffickers to forfeit their assets and make restitution to those they have exploited. The law gives victims better access to services like shelters, counseling, and medical care. It enables victims to stay in the United States so they can receive those services and helps law enforcement agencies to prosecute the traffickers. It increases our assistance to other countries, as well, to help them detect and punish this pernicious practice, and it provides for sanctions for any countries that refuse to take steps to end trafficking in women and children. I worked hard for these provisions. They build on what we've been doing at home and abroad to address the problem.

We see in the success of this landmark legislation once again that there is no real secret to getting things done in Washington. When we put progress over partisanship, we get results. When we work together, we get results.

Now, we've shown once again we can work together by passing this landmark legislation to fight violence against women. Let's follow the rule and finish all the work the American people expect of us. It's time for Congress to set partisanship aside on the last two unfinished bills and complete a budget with smaller class sizes, modern classrooms, family tax cuts, and a higher minimum wage—one that honors our values and secures a better future for our children and our great Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:57 p.m. on October 27 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 28. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 27 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, title IV of Public Law 103–322. H.R. 3244, approved October 28, was assigned Public Law No. 106–386.

Statement on Signing the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000

October 28, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3244, the “Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000” (the “Act”). This landmark legislation accomplishes a number of important objectives and Administration priorities. It strengthens and improves upon the Nation's efforts to fight violence against women. It also provides important new tools and resources to combat the worldwide scourge of trafficking in persons and provides vital assistance to victims of trafficking. And it helps American victims of terrorism abroad to collect court-awarded compensation.

This legislation builds on the “Violence Against Women Act of 1994” (VAWA), which created new Federal crimes and enhanced pen-

alties to combat sexual assault and domestic violence, and established new grant programs for law enforcement agencies, prosecution offices, and victim services organizations to fight violence against women. It also authorized funding for education, outreach, and prevention programs, which have helped to create coordinated community responses to violence against women throughout the United States. While we can certainly take pride in what we have accomplished since 1994, we know we must do more. To that end, H.R. 3244 reauthorizes VAWA and improves on the original bill by establishing several new initiatives.

I am particularly pleased that H.R. 3244 reauthorizes VAWA's grant programs through Fiscal

Year 2005. The Act improves several current programs by setting aside 5 percent of VAWA grant funds for tribes and directing resources toward certain traditionally underserved populations, such as victims of dating violence, older women, and women with disabilities. The Act requires certain VAWA's grantees to facilitate the filing and service of protection orders without cost to the victims. The Act authorizes a civil legal assistance program for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, who desperately need help with legal matters related to their abuse. The Act authorizes appropriations through Fiscal Year 2005 for the National Domestic Violence Hotline, battered women's shelters, and rape prevention and education grants. H.R. 3244 requires national standards and protocols for conducting sexual assault forensic examinations, as well as establishes supervised visitation programs, which will help ensure that children are safe when visiting with their parents and that battered women remain safe during visitation exchanges.

The Act also will improve the ability of Federal prosecutors to prosecute interstate crimes of domestic violence, stalking, and violations of protection orders. The Act creates an interstate cyberstalking offense. The Act enhances the enforcement of protection orders across State and tribal lines by prohibiting registration as a prerequisite to enforcement of out-of-state or tribal orders and by prohibiting notification of a batterer without the victim's consent when an order is registered in a new jurisdiction. Moreover, the Act amends the Parental Kidnaping Prevention Act to expand emergency jurisdiction to cover domestic violence, thus enabling victims who flee abuse to obtain custody orders without returning to the jurisdiction where the batterer resides.

Of great importance, H.R. 3244 restores and expands VAWA's protections for battered immigrants by helping them escape abuse and by holding batterers accountable. The Act establishes a new nonimmigrant visa classification, which will offer greater protection to victims, while strengthening the ability of law enforcement agencies to detect, investigate, and prosecute cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and other violent crimes.

I am confident that enactment of these provisions and the other improvements to VAWA contained in H.R. 3244 will substantially enhance our efforts to end violence against women

in America and provide essential services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Similarly, the Act's anti-trafficking provisions represent a major step forward in my Administration's ongoing effort to eradicate modern-day slavery. In 1998, on International Women's Day, I issued an Executive Memorandum directing my Administration to combat this insidious human rights abuse through a three-part strategy of prosecuting traffickers, protecting and assisting trafficking victims, and preventing trafficking. We worked hard with Democrats and Republicans in Congress to craft comprehensive and effective legislation that would strengthen our ability to implement this strategy. I am pleased that this bipartisan effort has resulted in this landmark anti-trafficking legislation.

Over the past several years, we have taken every opportunity to shine a bright light on this dark corner of the criminal underworld, in part by continually raising with leaders around the world the need to work together to combat this intolerable and reprehensible practice. Last spring, the United States and the Philippines co-hosted a regional conference attended by over 20 Asian and Pacific nations to develop a regional action plan to combat trafficking and protect trafficking victims. The United States proposed and recently concluded 2 years of negotiations on a United Nations protocol to combat trafficking in persons which, for the first time, will require countries everywhere to criminalize trafficking and will provide a framework for enhanced protection of and assistance to victims.

I want to thank the First Lady, the Secretary of State, and the Attorney General for their leadership on this important issue. The Secretary of State, as Chair of the President's Interagency Council on Women, has led my Administration's interagency development and coordination of international and domestic anti-trafficking efforts. The First Lady has worked tirelessly to bring this issue out of the shadows. She has helped to mobilize the international community to address trafficking as both a human rights issue and a global crime problem. The Attorney General created the National Worker Exploitation Task Force to work in partnership with other agencies, particularly the Department of Labor, to coordinate the investigation and prosecution of trafficking and other cases of exploitation. The Task Force is training our Nation's

Federal law enforcement officials and has established a hotline to report trafficking cases.

The Act creates new felony criminal offenses to combat trafficking with respect to slavery or peonage; sex trafficking in children; and unlawful confiscation of the victim's passport or other documents in furtherance of the trafficking scheme. It also creates a new "forced labor" felony criminal offense that will provide Federal prosecutors with the tools needed to prosecute the sophisticated forms of nonphysical coercion that traffickers use today to exploit their victims. Under H.R. 3244, any person convicted of any of these new criminal offenses would be subject to forfeiture of his or her assets and required to pay full restitution to his or her victims. These new offenses and the tougher sentences called for by this legislation will assist Federal prosecutors in ensuring that traffickers are convicted and appropriately punished for their crimes.

The Act also authorizes essential services and protections for victims of trafficking. Within the United States, H.R. 3244 establishes a Cabinet-level interagency task force to combat and monitor trafficking, provides eligibility to trafficking victims for a broad range of Federal benefits, and requires procedures to improve Federal law enforcement's identification of trafficking cases and to provide for trafficking victims' safety and assistance while in the Government's custody. The Act also authorizes the Attorney General to provide grants to develop programs to assist victims of trafficking. A cornerstone of H.R. 3244 is that it makes trafficking victims eligible for a temporary nonimmigrant visa so that they can remain in the United States to help law enforcement in the prosecution of traffickers and receive needed protection and assistance.

The Act establishes international initiatives to enhance economic opportunity for potential victims and public awareness programs on the dangers of trafficking and available protections for victims. The Act encourages other countries to take steps to implement protection and assistance for trafficking victims and to prosecute traffickers, and authorizes the President to assist countries to help them meet certain minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The President may withhold assistance from countries that are not making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with these minimum standards. Traffickers can themselves be sanctioned. H.R. 3244 also expands existing

reporting on the nature and extent of trafficking in each foreign country, which will build upon the Department of State's current coverage of this issue.

Traffickers who prey on vulnerable women and children should have no place to hide, and victims of trafficking must be treated with dignity and afforded vital assistance and protection. I expect this legislation to be of immense benefit in rooting out this despicable practice and in helping future Administrations carry on the vital work that this Administration has begun.

The Act also contains new authorities to compensate American victims of terrorism and their families. I am pleased that the Congress and the executive branch have been able to reach agreement on legislation that reflects our shared goals: providing compensation for the victims of international terrorism and protecting the President's ability to act on behalf of the Nation on important foreign policy and national security issues.

There are certain provisions worth noting. First, those persons electing to receive 110 percent of their awarded compensatory damages with statutory interest and court-awarded sanctions relinquish all rights and claims to all amounts awarded and will be deemed to be compensated in full for their judgments. Those persons electing to receive 100 percent of their compensatory damages with statutory interest and court-awarded sanctions relinquish all rights and claims to compensatory damages and amounts awarded as judicial sanctions, and, necessarily, any related interest, costs and attorneys fees. So as not to interfere with important national interests, H.R. 3244 makes clear that persons who receive such payments are prohibited from attaching or executing against certain types of property in order to satisfy other amounts awarded.

Second, Congress has reaffirmed in this Act my statutory authority, which is the authority provided under the Trading with the Enemy Act (50 U.S.C. App. 5(b)), where appropriate and consistent with the national interest, to vest foreign assets located in the United States for the purpose, among other things, of assisting, and where appropriate, making payments to victims of terrorism.

Third, H.R. 3244 repeals the Presidential national security waiver, provided by section 117 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999, which was applicable to

the requirements of subsections (a) and (b). Section 117(b), which amended the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act to permit awards of punitive damages against certain defendants in certain circumstances, as well as section 117(a), have never been operative because I executed the national security waiver on October 21, 1998. In its place, H.R. 3244 provides a national security waiver applicable to section 1610(f)(1) of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, and addresses the other national security concerns covered by my earlier waiver by repealing section 117(b) of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999, and modifying section 1610(f)(2) of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. Upon my signing of H.R. 3244, I am exercising the discretion given to me by section 2002(f) of this Act to waive section 1610(f)(1) of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act.

Fourth, H.R. 3244 makes the United States fully subrogated to the rights of the persons who receive payments under this Act, to the extent of the payments. The Congress reaffirms my authority to pursue these subrogated rights as claims or offsets against Iran in appropriate ways, including negotiations leading to any normalization process. In addition, no funds are permitted to be paid to Iran, or released to Iran, from property blocked under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act or the Foreign Military Sales Fund, until such

claims have been dealt with to the satisfaction of the United States. The determination that the claims have been dealt with to the satisfaction of the United States will be subject to Presidential discretion.

This legislation is a measure of the United States Government's commitment to the victims of terrorism, to deter future acts of terrorism, and to defend the United States from its evils. It is not designed to preclude any other means to this end. The United States will continue to pursue an aggressive, comprehensive policy incorporating diplomacy, law enforcement, intelligence, and other means to protect its citizens.

In conclusion, I would like to recognize and congratulate the bipartisan sponsorship of, and support for, the "Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000." Its enactment is an achievement of which all involved may be justly proud. It will serve us well in the years ahead as we continue to do what is needed to detect and eradicate trafficking in persons, violence against women, and other reprehensible forms of criminal conduct.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 28, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 3244, the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, approved October 28, was assigned Public Law No. 106-386.

Remarks on the Budget and Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 28, 2000

The President. Good afternoon.

Q. Got it right.

The President. I got it right. I'm making progress. [Laughter]

As I said yesterday, when this Congress has acted in a spirit of genuine bipartisanship, we have made profound progress. Yesterday I signed the VA/HUD bill that invests in the health of veterans, advances welfare reform with 75,000 housing vouchers, strengthens AmeriCorps, and invests in cutting-edge scientific research with the largest increase ever in the National Science Foundation. Earlier this

month I signed an Interior bill that creates the largest appropriation for lands preservation in our Nation's history. I also look forward to signing the bipartisan foreign operations bill, which will fund our debt relief initiative for the poorest countries in the world.

And just a few moments ago, I signed a vitally important and bipartisan Agriculture appropriations bill. This legislation will fund our Nation's agriculture programs for the coming year and provided much need help to our farmers, our ranchers, our rural communities, who have