

together today to support the development of legislation that would make a significant impact on one of the most vulnerable populations in our Nation.

The Strengthening Our Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act is an important step in ensuring that child welfare agencies have the proper systems in place to identify, assess, and document child victims of trafficking.

Stories like those of Caroline and the other young girls in the child sex trafficking unit of the Los Angeles County Probation Department are critical to understanding exactly the effect our bill would have in laying the foundation of transforming the way our Nation responds to child sex trafficking.

However, it is also important to recognize that this bill and the other bills on the floor today are steps on that journey, and there is still an enormous amount of work that needs to be done.

Again, I would like to thank members of the Education and Workforce Committee and the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth for their continued commitment to advancing policies that help change the lives of children.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my staff, Adriane Alicea, and especially my former deputy chief of staff, Jenny Wood, who did the lion's share of work to make this legislation happen, and without her hard work and dedication, this legislation would not be on the floor today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard some compelling and moving stories this evening that underscore our moral obligation as a society to do all we can to combat this epidemic of child and human trafficking. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5081 and all of the related legislation that we will consider this evening.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Strengthening Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act.

We all know that our nation's children are our most precious resource, and we wish that every child had the opportunity to grow up in a family that loved and protected them, but unfortunately that is not the case.

As a result, about 400,000 children are in the foster care system as we speak. In the last few years, there have been great improvements in how we care for foster children, particularly the focus on supporting youth as they age out of the system.

But there is a stain on the American foster care system that we have not adequately addressed: child sex trafficking. Child sex trafficking is truly one of the most deplorable and disgusting crimes any adult can commit, and it's our job to do all that we can to end it—especially when so many victims are children for whom we have taken responsibility in the foster care system.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children tells us that 60% of runaways who are victims of sex trafficking were at one time in the custody of social services or in foster care. In my home state of New York, 85%

of trafficking victims have prior child welfare involvement. While state-specific numbers vary throughout the country, they all tell us that something more needs to be done.

To add insult to injury, far too often, state child welfare systems fail to properly identify and assist trafficked and exploited children. Instead of being cared for and supported, these children are often sent to the juvenile justice system and criminalized for, at no fault of their own, being raped and trafficked! These children are victims, and we have a moral obligation to protect them.

I'm a proud original co-sponsor of the Strengthening Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act, which would help identify exploited children, train child protective services workers to appropriately respond to them, and connect child victims to specialized services so that they can begin the process of recovery. I am particularly pleased that this legislation includes a directive for HHS to report on any barriers in Federal laws or regulations that may be preventing States from properly identifying, assessing, and serving children who are victims of trafficking. I believe one such barrier is that currently, under the Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act, young victims of trafficking are not automatically defined as victims of abuse and neglect. Making a definitional change would ensure that these children, who are clearly victims, are supported and protected, not sent to the juvenile justice system for prosecution. I look forward to receiving this report next year and working with my colleagues to make that change for the sake of these young people who deserve our protection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5081.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5111) to improve the response to victims of child sex trafficking, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5111

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

SECTION 1. RESPONSE TO VICTIMS OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING.

Section 404(b)(1)(P)(iii) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5773(b)(1)(P)(iii)) is amended by striking "child prostitution" and inserting "child sex trafficking, including child prostitution".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5111.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and rise in support of H.R. 5111.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives continues its commitment to providing the necessary tools and policies to help reduce child sex trafficking and better serve these victims in the United States. I want to thank Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY for her leadership on this issue and for introducing H.R. 5111, which will improve the ability of law enforcement officials and others to respond to and assist these victims.

For too long these victims have been viewed as willing participants and have been treated as actors in the criminal scheme. However, we now know that oftentimes individuals are trapped as victims by human trafficking organizations, and sadly, many of these victims are children.

As previous House efforts have done, the bills today attempt to change for the better how we view these victims. Congresswoman BEATTY's legislation will ensure that we view victims of sex trafficking not as participants but as victims, and ensure that child sex trafficking crimes are reported.

Under current law, the National Center For Missing and Exploited Children, NCMEC, operates a CyberTipline to provide online users and electronic service providers a means of reporting Internet-related child sexual exploitation in many areas, including child prostitution. However, children who are sex-trafficked or sexually exploited should be treated as victims, not criminals. In fact, approximately one out of seven runaway youth are likely victims of sex trafficking, and roughly one out of three youths are lured into prostitution within 48 hours of running away from home.

For this reason, H.R. 5111 would replace the term "child prostitution" with "child sex trafficking" in the CyberTipline reporting categories to reinforce that children who are sex-trafficked or sexually exploited are victims whose situation should be taken seriously when reported. It would also ensure the public recognizes that child prostitution is included in how NCMEC uses the term "child sex trafficking," and thus should still be reported to the tip line.

Again, I want to thank Congresswoman BEATTY, along with the Education and Workforce Committee and

House leadership, for recognizing the need to steadfastly address this dreadful practice. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5111.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 5111, a bill I introduced which would help victims of child sex trafficking by decriminalizing their behavior.

I thank Chairman KLINE from Minnesota and Ranking Member MILLER from California of the Education and the Workforce Committee for bringing this important bill to the floor for consideration. I also thank Representative WALBERG from Michigan, who is managing the bill today for the Republicans.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Senator PORTMAN, whom I partnered with on this legislation earlier this year. Together we introduced bipartisan, bicameral legislation in order to assist victims of child sex trafficking and ensure that they are viewed and treated as victims and not criminals. We participated in a roundtable discussion with the Dominican Sisters of Peace in my district with diverse stakeholders who shared stories of victims and ideas of what we could do to further help these children who are trafficked.

We heard story after story, just like on the House floor today: the story of Caroline, in my district; the story of Teresa, who was a victim herself at a very young age and now is a national advocate against child sex trafficking.

As we know, human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world. In fact, according to the United States State Department, human trafficking is the world's second-largest criminal enterprise after the illegal drug trade.

□ 1815

In the United States, some 300,000 children are at risk each year for commercial sexual exploitation. Many of them come from family and social backgrounds that render them particularly at risk. These are children who fall through the cracks in our society.

Mr. Speaker, many are runaways, homeless, and in and out of foster care. These children deserve better. The average age of a traffic victim in the United States is 12 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, this is shameful. At 12 years of age, girls and boys should be playing youth sports, participating in their school science fair, learning a new language, or just being able to be a child.

In my home State of Ohio, each year, an estimated 1,078 Ohio children become victims of human trafficking, and over 3,000 more are at risk. Ohio is the fifth leading State for human trafficking because of its proximity to a waterway that leads to an international border and a system of interstate highways that allows an individual to exit the State within 2 hours to almost anywhere.

The I-75 corridor—which runs through Toledo, Dayton, and Cincinnati—is infamous for subjecting children to the horrors of sex trafficking, with reports of victims being repeatedly abused.

Just last week, my hometown paper, The Columbus Dispatch, reported that Ohio children younger than 6 years old have been sexually trafficked by their parents in exchange for drugs, for rent, or cash.

Mr. Speaker, I will enter a copy of this article into the RECORD.

[From the Columbus Dispatch, July 11, 2014.]

OHIOANS SELLING SEX WITH THEIR OWN KIDS

(By Alan Johnson)

Ohio children younger than 6 have been sexually trafficked by their own parents in exchange for drugs, rent and cash, a new report indicates.

Information from the Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers shows that 51 minors from across the state were potential human-trafficking victims—five of them age 6 or younger—over a nine-month period. The network has a state contract to screen children referred by law enforcement, children's services agencies and others, to determine whether they may have been trafficked.

Statistics from July 2013 to March 2014 showed all but five of the 51 minors reported were 13 to 18 years old. Only one case involved a male. They came from both urban and rural areas of the state.

"I'm most shocked that families are doing this to their own children," said the director of the advocacy center that originally detected three of the cases involving the youngest children. She asked not to be identified for this story to avoid pinpointing specific details about the cases that might cause problems for the children, or jeopardize legal proceedings.

"We think it happens to young girls who are runaways. But with these youngest kids, it's their actual families who are trafficking them."

She said more information about what happened to very young children gradually comes out over time as they are in counseling and other therapeutic programs.

Information on at least three of the five youngest victims indicated they were trafficked sexually by one or both of their parents in "exchange for drugs, rent, goods or money," said Amy Deverson Roberts of the children's advocacy network.

She said some cases have been referred for prosecution and others are pending. She could not release specifics about any cases.

The suspected victims were referred for help to law enforcement, children's services, mental-health providers and other agencies as needed, Roberts said.

"It's all about collaboration to provide the best services for victims," Roberts said.

The network last year received a \$523,000, two-year grant from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to provide training to detect signs of trafficking, to put on education programs, and to handle child referrals. The grant came from a trafficking task force created in an executive order by Gov. John Kasich.

Officials estimate that 1,100 children are forced into the sex trade each year in Ohio; 13 is the most common age for children to be victimized.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, more must be done to assist these children, these children who are victims, not criminals, and need our help.

We know that no single system can successfully combat trafficking. Pre-

venting, identifying, and serving victims of trafficking requires a multi-coordinated approach across all levels of government. We need to encourage all people, when they see something, say something.

Currently, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children operates a CyberTipline, which receives leads and tips regarding suspected crimes of sexual exploitation committed against children. More than 2.3 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation have been made to the CyberTipline between 1998 and March of this year.

In identifying the types of sexual exploitation that should be reported to the CyberTipline, current law does not specifically mention "child sex trafficking" as one of its reporting categories, even though the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children encounters child victims of sex trafficking and currently uses this term on its Web site in order to encourage the public's reporting of these types of crimes.

Instead, the statute uses the term "child prostitution," which we know does not fully and accurately capture these types of crimes against children.

My bill would add the phrase "child sex trafficking," including "child prostitution" to the section b(1)(p) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act.

Working with my colleagues on the Education and the Workforce Committee and Congressman CHRIS SMITH from New Jersey, we have crafted legislation in order to improve and update the law in order to reflect the current state of Federal law and to reinforce that children who are sex-trafficked or sexually exploited are victims and not criminals.

Mr. Speaker, children in sex trafficking situations are often misidentified as "willing" participants. We know there is widespread lack of awareness and understanding of trafficking.

By adding the term "child sex trafficking," including "child prostitution," the Missing Children's Assistance Act will continue to fight the perception that sex trafficking is a voluntary, victimless crime.

Child sex trafficking is an issue of abuse and exploitation of children.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS).

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5111, a bill to improve the response to victims of child trafficking.

First, I would like to commend my colleague, Representative JOYCE BEATTY, for her commitment to transforming the language that we use to discuss child victims of sex trafficking and for taking the lead on this important legislation.

While antitrafficking advocates and organizations have worked tirelessly over the years to ensure that the framework and language that we use to describe child victims of trafficking recognize that they are, in fact, victims, we still have a long way to go.

For example, men who exploit the children, we call them “johns.” We arrest the traffickers, we arrest the victims, but the men are seldom arrested, and when they are, it is for soliciting.

As we change the way we speak about the girls, we must change the way we speak about the men, the men who are not johns, but child molesters.

Representative BEATTY’s bill is another critical building block to transforming the framework and dialogue around child victims of sex trafficking. I look forward to continuing to change the conversation and urge my colleagues in the House to support this important legislation.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me conclude by saying that I urge all of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to support H.R. 5111.

This is a very important piece of legislation that will help the victims of child sex trafficking. It will decriminalize their behavior. It will help rescue them from the horrible situations that we have heard tonight.

Let me also share that it is not only about H.R. 5111, but it is about all of the bills that we are hearing tonight that I ask this House to support.

I would certainly be remiss if I did not thank the House leadership on both sides of the aisle for allowing us to bring these important bills forward and also my entire staff, but specifically my legislative director for all of her hard work.

Lastly, to Congresswoman BASS, let me say thank you for being someone who has led this charge and has been willing to work with me and others on helping bring all of our bills forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

The passage of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, shows the House’s commitment to not only bolstering enforcement efforts against human traffickers, but also ensuring that we properly identify victims.

I urge all Members to lead efforts in their districts, to continue the conversation, as I have done in mine, about human trafficking, to learn what more we can do in our communities to curtail this hideous crime.

During the human trafficking roundtables I have held in my district, law enforcement officials have consistently raised the need to make community members aware of the real and present threat of human trafficking. We must work to not only educate children, but also families and the general public about the safety risks.

H.R. 5111 is another step to educating our communities about human trafficking victims, and it continues our work to ensure that we are doing what we can to help reduce this horrible crime.

I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 5111, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5111, “An Act to Improve the Response To victims Of Child Sex Trafficking.” I would like to congratulate Representative BEATTY for her work.

Youth sexual exploitation and trafficking is a major issue in this country that affects more than 293,000 young Americans.

As a Representative of Texas, this issue is close to my heart as my state is plagued by this problem. For example, multiple sporting events, conventions, and other large festivities make Houston a prime location for trafficking.

Another metric demonstrating the high level of trafficking in Houston is the high volume of calls to National Trafficking Hotline coming from Houston.

I have worked on this issue for a very long time as a member of the Anti-Human Trafficking Caucus and recognize the enormous damage that human trafficking does to its victim and to society.

There have been many efforts made to improve how our system addresses the issue of sex trafficking. However, there is still a great deal of work to be done to reframe the issue as one of abuse and exploitation of children rather than one of teenage prostitution.

The legal definition of sex trafficking states that “any individual induced or caused to engage in commercial sex activity who is under 18 is a victim of trafficking.”

But what about those who are teenagers and voluntarily engage in this sort of activity?

We need to update the Missing Children’s Assistance Act so that it better recognizes these young people as victims of a serious crime and reports the information accordingly.

Under current law, (42 U.S.C. 5773 (b)(1)(P)), the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children operates a cyber tipline to provide online users and electronic service providers a means of reporting Internet-related child sexual exploitation in many areas, including child prostitution.

Children, who are sex trafficked or sexually exploited, even if they are in their teens, are victims. They are not criminals and should not be categorized as such.

H.R. 5111 would replace the term “child prostitution” with “child sex trafficking” in order to reinforce that children who are sex trafficked or sexually exploited are victims whose situation should be taken seriously when reported on the online tipline.

I believe that this bill is a step in the right direction for recognizing the broad impact of sex trafficking in the United States and assisting those who are exploited by it.

I urge all members to join me in supporting H.R. 5111 so we can all work towards a society where we no longer have to worry about our children being exploited by the sex trade.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5111, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PREVENTING SEX TRAFFICKING AND STRENGTHENING FAMILIES ACT

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4980) to prevent and address sex trafficking of children in foster care, to extend and improve adoption incentives, and to improve international child support recovery.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4980

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 “Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act”.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.
- Sec. 3. References.

TITLE I—PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT RISK OF SEX TRAFFICKING

Subtitle A—Identifying and Protecting Children and Youth at Risk of Sex Trafficking

- Sec. 101. Identifying, documenting, and determining services for children and youth at risk of sex trafficking.
- Sec. 102. Reporting instances of sex trafficking.
- Sec. 103. Including sex trafficking data in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System.
- Sec. 104. Locating and responding to children who run away from foster care.
- Sec. 105. Increasing information on children in foster care to prevent sex trafficking.

Subtitle B—Improving Opportunities for Children in Foster Care and Supporting Permanency

- Sec. 111. Supporting normalcy for children in foster care.
- Sec. 112. Improving another planned permanent living arrangement as a permanency option.
- Sec. 113. Empowering foster children age 14 and older in the development of their own case plan and transition planning for a successful adulthood.
- Sec. 114. Ensuring foster children have a birth certificate, Social Security card, health insurance information, medical records, and a driver’s license or equivalent State-issued identification card.
- Sec. 115. Information on children in foster care in annual reports using AFCARS data; consultation.