

H.R. 5116 also ensures that Congress has insight into the level of success of the training being provided, and that the Department's State and local partners have full access to training curricula to establish their own trafficking awareness programs.

I applaud Mr. MEADOWS for introducing this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote yes on this common-sense measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5116.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING PRIORITIZATION ACT

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2283) to prioritize the fight against human trafficking within the Department of State according to congressional intent in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 without increasing the size of the Federal Government, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2283

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 "Human Trafficking Prioritization Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The International Labor Organization estimates that nearly 21,000,000 people are subjected to modern slavery around the world at any given time and that the majority of the enslaved are women and girls.

(2) Congress authorized the creation of a Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (division A of Public Law 106-386) in order to directly assist the Secretary of State in his or her effort to coordinate a United States Government interagency response to domestic and international trafficking in persons.

(3) The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons monitors trafficking worldwide and produces the online and printed versions of the annual Trafficking in Persons Report, which is Congress' primary resource for human trafficking reporting, analysis, and recommendations on the United States and 186 countries around the world.

(4) The annual Trafficking in Persons Report contains tier rankings of each country on which it reports, and these tier rankings have become an essential diplomatic tool for promoting protection for victims, prevention of trafficking, and prosecution of perpetrators.

(5) Some countries have openly stated, and many others have confided, that dramatic improvements in the country's human trafficking record were directly related to avoidance of a low tier ranking in the annual Trafficking in Persons Report.

(6) Ambassador Mark Lagon, former Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat

Trafficking in Persons (2007–2009), testified before the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives on April 18, 2013, that "[T]he State Department does a tremendous job in producing a report which tells it like it is, offering objective rankings. Yet at times it pulls punches, typically due to the urging of regional specialists rather than the TIP Office's dedicated experts on trafficking."

(7) Ambassador John Miller, former Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (2002–2006), recently stated that, "Upgrading the status of the Office to a Bureau will not create additional bureaucracy—it will simply give JTIP and the Ambassador-at-large who heads it equal standing with regional and functional bureaus at the State Department. That standing is absolutely essential for the issue to remain a priority, especially when multiple U.S. interests are engaged."

(8) The tier ranking process authorized by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 has been in some instances compromised by the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking subordinate stature within the Department of State.

(9) It is essential for Congress and the Secretary of State to be accurately informed regarding United States and foreign country successes and failures in the fight against human trafficking.

(10) The diplomatic power and credibility of the Trafficking in Persons Report is based on rigorous scholarship and scrupulous application of the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking and is undermined by political, rather than factual, tier rankings.

(11) Strong and effective anti-slavery policy requires that officials from the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking have equal hierarchical standing with State Department regional bureaus and direct access to the Secretary of State.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State will be more effective in carrying out duties mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if the Office status is changed to that of a Bureau within the Department hierarchy;

(2) the change in status from Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to a Bureau can be accomplished without increasing the number of personnel or the budget of the current Office;

(3) a Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking would be more effective in carrying out duties mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if the Bureau were headed by an Assistant Secretary with direct access to the Secretary of State, rather than an Ambassador-at-Large; and

(4) the Secretary of State should review the current use of the 24 Assistant Secretary positions authorized by section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)) and make appropriate revisions, consolidations, and eliminations, to ensure that those positions reflect the highest Departmental needs and foreign policy priorities of the United States, including efforts to combat trafficking in persons.

SEC. 4. BUREAU TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 105(e) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(e)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking "OFFICE TO MONITOR AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING" and in-

serting "BUREAU TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS";

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking "Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking" and inserting "Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons";

(B) in the second sentence, by striking "Office" and inserting "Bureau"; and

(C) in the sixth sentence, by striking "Office" and inserting "Bureau"; and

(3) in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2), by striking "Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking" and inserting "Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons".

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 or in any other Act to the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking shall be deemed to be a reference to the Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

SEC. 5. REPORT REGARDING DESIGNATION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report detailing—

(1) for each current Assistant Secretary of State position—

(A) the title of that Assistant Secretary of State;

(B) how long that particular Assistant Secretary designation has been in existence; and

(C) whether that particular Assistant Secretary designation was legislatively mandated or authorized and, if so, the relevant statutory citation for such mandate or authorization; and

(2) whether the Secretary intends to designate one of the Assistant Secretary of State positions authorized by section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)) as the Assistant Secretary of State to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and the reasons for that decision.

SEC. 6. COUNTRIES ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST FOR 4 CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT ARE DOWNGRADED AND REINSTATED ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST.

Section 110(b)(2) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7107(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(F) COUNTRIES ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST FOR 4 CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT ARE DOWNGRADED AND REINSTATED ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST.—Notwithstanding subparagraphs (D) and (E), a country that—

"(i) was included on the special watch list described in subparagraph (A) for 4 consecutive years after the date of the enactment of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, and

"(ii) was subsequently included on the list of countries described in paragraph (1)(C),

may not thereafter be included on the special watch list described in subparagraph (A) for more than 1 consecutive year."

SEC. 7. COST LIMITATION.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for "Diplomatic and Consular Programs" to carry out the provisions of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today is an historic day for the House of Representatives, so I would like to begin by offering my profound appreciation for the extraordinary leadership of Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR for encouraging and moving through this House this very comprehensive package of antitrafficking legislation. I have been in Congress now 34 years, and I have never seen so many bills that are mutually reinforcing, that send a clear, unambiguous message to the world, as well as to our fellow Americans, that we care and we care deeply about the victims, and we want to put the perpetrators behind bars for a very, very long time. Again, I want to thank ERIC CANTOR for his leadership.

I am very proud to say that the United States continues to lead the world in our trafficking responses at home and abroad. The bills we debate today not only bring relief to trafficking victims, but light the way for the rest of the world to do likewise.

One of the greatest and most successful efforts to transmit our best practices to the rest of the world and to ensure accountability for minimum standards that we created in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act is the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons housed in the U.S. Department of State, created by the legislation I authored known as the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000.

Over the last 15 years, this office has been led by several incredibly talented and dedicated ambassadors who, through their persistence and grit, have turned out the annual Trafficking in Persons Report, laying bare the record of each country for the world to see, and summarizing the country's progress in an annual tier ranking.

Tier 1 countries, for the record, are countries that fully meet the minimum standards prescribed by the act. Tier 2 countries do not meet the minimum standards but are making significant efforts to do so. Tier 3 countries do not meet the standards and are not making significant efforts to do so, and those countries can be held liable through a series of sanctions that are imposed by our government.

Along with Tier 1, 2 and 3, we also have what we call a watch list. Since the TIP report's inception, Mr. Speaker, more than 100 countries have enacted antitrafficking laws, and many countries have taken other steps required to significantly raise their tier rankings, many citing the TIP Report as a key factor in their increased antitrafficking response.

The importance of accurate tier rankings cannot be overstated. Over the years, we have seen countries begin in earnest the hard work of reaching the minimum standards after the TIP Report accurately exposed—with a Tier 3 ranking—each country's failure to

take significant action against human trafficking. Whether that country be a close ally or foe, the TIP Report is designed to speak truth to power. And even some of our greatest friends and allies, like South Korea and Israel, have found themselves on Tier 3, only to engage in Herculean efforts to get off Tier 3 and to protect victims and to prosecute the traffickers.

The tier rankings were meant to be and in large part have become a very powerful tool in the fight against trafficking. We have found a system that works. But tragically, it is sometimes muffled, misguided, and marginalized by unrelated bilateral concerns and by the internal structure of the State Department itself.

In the words of Ambassador Mark Lagon, who from 2007 to 2009 was our Ambassador-at-Large to combat human trafficking:

The State Department does a tremendous job in producing a report which tells it like it is, offering objective rankings. Yet at times it pulls punches, typically due to the urging of regional specialists rather than the TIP Office's dedicated experts on trafficking.

This problem is what my bill, the Human Trafficking Prioritization Act, H.R. 2283, seeks to remedy. The Human Trafficking Prioritization Act will keep the fight against human trafficking from being lost in the politics of other U.S. interests by raising the status of the J/TIP "office" to that of a "bureau" within the U.S. Department of State.

In the words of Ambassador John Miller, who served from 2002 to 2006 as Ambassador-at-Large:

Upgrading the status of the office to a bureau will not create additional bureaucracy, it will simply give J/TIP and the Ambassador-at-Large who heads it equal standing with regional and functional bureaus at the Department of State. That standing is absolutely essential for the issue to remain a priority, especially when multiple U.S. interests are engaged.

H.R. 2283 encourages the Secretary of State to upgrade the "ambassador-at-large" position to that of "Assistant Secretary," to lead the bureau without adding to the number of Assistant Secretaries the State Department is permitted by law.

In addition, H.R. 2283 will make it more difficult for countries and some State Department bureaus to game the tier-ranking system by limiting the time period countries can use promises of action to avoid tier downgrading. Currently, a country can sit on the Tier 2 watch list for up to 4 years with Presidential waivers, effectively stringing the U.S. along with promises to take action without ever actually taking action. After 4 years, by law, the country must be automatically downgraded to Tier 3 and, therefore, subject to sanctions.

The law worked very well upon its first implementation in the 2013 reporting cycle. But we discovered a problem this year when China was wrongly and foolishly upgraded from Tier 3 to Tier 2 Watch List. As the law is currently

written, China and its enablers at the U.S. Department of State can again game the system for 4 more years. H.R. 2283 will hold countries like China accountable by limiting to 1 year the amount of time a country can stay on the Tier 2 Watch List after the country was previously ordered downgraded to Tier 3.

H.R. 2283 builds on the success of the TIP Office for the sake of the 21 million people still living in modern day slavery, and does so without increasing the cost of government. H.R. 2283 will give the TIP Office the integration and voice it deserves within the State Department and ensure accurate accountability for countries failing to meet the minimum standards for the eliminate of human trafficking.

I respectfully ask my colleagues to support the bill. I would also like to offer special thanks to Gary Haugen, Holly Burkhalter, Tim Gehring, and the grassroots efforts of the International Justice Mission, which has worked so tirelessly to educate Members of Congress on the importance of this bill. I would note parenthetically that at least two of those people, Holly and Gary, especially Gary when we were first writing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, was a frequent contributor to hearings as we crafted the bill, and then when we did the oversight as to how well or poorly the U.S. Department of State was implementing the law. You could always count on Gary Haugen to be there to give a very incisive look at the work that was being done or not being done. So a very special thanks to them for their work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, and I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and ask unanimous consent that he may control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and rise in strong support of H.R. 2283, the Human Trafficking Prioritization Act.

First, let me thank my friend and colleague, Representative CHRIS SMITH, for introducing this important piece of legislation which elevates the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to the status of a bureau within the State Department.

Put simply, as we have heard this evening, human trafficking is modern day slavery. It represents a brutal violation of individual freedom and human dignity. Unfortunately, this practice is all too common around the world and in our own neighborhoods. But, fortunately, the United States is committed to responding to this crime here at home and around the world. Since this Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000, leaders on both sides of the aisle have

rallied around this issue. Indeed, three administrations have made this effort a priority. Our coordination across government through the President's Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking has never been stronger.

Mr. Speaker, today we can take another step forward by making the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons a full bureau within the State Department. This office is already doing critical work. Its annual Trafficking in Persons Report has become the global gold standard in assessing how well governments around the world are meeting this important challenge.

Elevating the trafficking office to a State Department bureau would send a strong message to the world that combating modern day slavery remains a top priority to the United States. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEADOWS. 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 materials on H.R. 2283, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

I want to rise in support of this particular legislation and follow-up on what the gentleman from New Jersey shared regarding the importance of not only the TIP Report but to remain vigilant with a number of the countries abroad where trafficking has become very commonplace.

Just in the last week, we had an ambassador from one of those countries come to us and share the fact that they are a Tier 3 country. They were very concerned and wanted to outline the things that they were doing to try to combat human trafficking.

It was very obvious to me that with the emphasis we have placed on that, not only here in Congress but with the State Department, that making human trafficking a priority for them to correct and combat was certainly something that has drawn great attention. To strengthen the efforts there, to continue to strengthen the State Department, to raise and elevate this position to bureau status, certainly will send a message not only to our country, not only to countries abroad, but hopefully will give hope to the young girls and young men that are being trafficked in so many of these foreign countries that the United States is serious about this, and that it is not just a few words that perhaps are shared by myself and the gentleman from New York here on the House floor today but that it goes to the very core of who we are, that we must stand up and be a voice for those who have no voice.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from North Carolina. I listened with great interest to his words earlier. I would like to thank him and acknowledge him for his leadership on this issue. It is so great to see him reaching across the aisle to do so, and I want to acknowledge his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from New Mexico (Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN).

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation and many other bills we are considering that deal with human and sex trafficking—an important issue, a critical issue, that especially relates to protecting children who are too often victims of abuse and violence. I commend the Speaker for bringing these bills up for a vote.

Mr. Speaker, as I was watching the debate this evening, I couldn't help but come back to the floor. I hope all of my colleagues that are speaking tonight on the importance of passing these human trafficking bills will join us next week to talk about the importance of protecting children.

It was with alarm, Mr. Speaker, that I read a letter that Speaker BOEHNER penned to President Barack Obama that appears that my Republican colleagues, when they left a meeting earlier this afternoon, are asking to take away the very protections from children during a law that was passed in 2008 that we are asking to protect these children tonight.

So I come today to ask my colleagues to read the transcripts, to hear the debate this evening, and to think about it, to go home this weekend and, whatever faith that we may be, that we pray about it and we talk to our pastors and our religious leaders about it because these kids that we are going to be talking about next week are the very children that need protections as well.

The motivation to pass these bills today is the same motivation that moved this body to pass legislation that became law in 2008, to protect children. This law has since become the subject of much condemnation for many of my Republican colleagues as we discuss the humanitarian crisis on the border.

We are here on this floor debating legislation to protect children, yet many of my colleagues want to take away due process from children who are trying to escape unimaginable violence in Central America. In Honduras, the murder capital of the world, the violence was captured in a story recently—and I apologize for the graphic nature of this story.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COTTON). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico.

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. This is a story from The New York Times:

During a recent late-night visit to the San Pedro Sula morgue, more than 60 bodies, all victims of violence, were seen piled in a heap, each wrapped in a brown plastic bag. While picking bullets out of a 15-year-old boy shot 15 times, technicians discussed how they regularly received corpses of children under 10 and sometimes as young as 2. Last week, in nearby Santa Barbara, an 11-year-old had his throat slit by other children because he did not pay a 50-cent extortion fee.

The doctor at the morgue said: before, we saw children being killed because they were at the scene when gangs were coming to prey on families and they just happened to be there; now, we are seeing kids kill kids.

There are hundreds of other stories like this.

Mr. Speaker, I beg and I plead of my colleagues, each and every one of us that may or may not have been here when the law passed, but those of us that are here now, these are kids. I know that you and I, Mr. Speaker, that we love children, and we want to make sure that they are not victims of these horrific crimes.

Please, please, take this weekend and ask the Speaker to remove the provisions that will take away the due process from these children. As we pass these bills together, let us not forget what brought this Congress together in 2008, to protect these children.

Let us show the same compassion that is a driving force of these bills tonight.

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New Mexico for his eloquent and passionate remarks, a concern so many of us share.

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, we have no more speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Human Trafficking Prioritization Act, H.R. 2283, and commend my friend and colleague Rep. CHRIS SMITH for introducing it. Congressman SMITH is a leader in the global fight against sex slavery and I thank him for all he has done and the leadership he continues to provide.

The State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) does a fantastic job of maintaining U.S. leadership and accountability in the worldwide effort to combat human trafficking.

Today, human trafficking represents a modern form of slavery. It is a crisis that victimizes 21 million people worldwide.

In my home state of Illinois, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center estimates 25,000 women and girls are exploited each year by sex traffickers.

More than 130 countries have created or strengthened their anti-trafficking laws largely due to the work carried out by the J/TIP. It's important, therefore, to provide the J/TIP with the standing it needs to maintain the momentum that has resulted in increased prosecution of traffickers, protection of victims, and prevention of human trafficking.

The Human Trafficking Prioritization Act does just that. By raising the status of the J/TIP “office” to that of a “bureau” and encouraging the Secretary of State to upgrade the “ambassador-at-large” position to that of an “assistant secretary,” H.R. 2283 builds upon the acknowledged accomplishments of the J/TIP.

It will give the J/TIP and the Ambassador-at-Large who leads it level standing with regional and functional bureaus within the State Department and prevent countries and other bureaus at the agency from gaming the tier ranking system. It achieves this without creating additional bureaucracy or additional cost to the government.

As a member of the Congressional Human Trafficking Task Force working with the congressional leadership, J/TIP, and international anti-trafficking groups to end sex slavery, I know it is critical to keep the fight against human trafficking from being consumed in a bureaucratic shuffle. I am convinced that the Human Trafficking Prioritization Act will only serve to enhance the vital work undertaken by the J/TIP.

Human trafficking targets the most vulnerable in a society. The Human Trafficking Prioritization Act will give the J/TIP the integration and voice it deserves within the Department of State to ensure nations are diligent in their efforts to protect the victims and punish the perpetrators of human trafficking.

Again, I thank Mr. SMITH for introducing this bill and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2283, “Human Trafficking Prioritization Act of 2014.”

I support this bipartisan legislation which modifies the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to elevate the status of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to that of the Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which shall be headed by an Assistant Secretary of State.

The office produces the annual Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report), which is Congress’ primary resource for human trafficking reporting, analysis and recommendations for the United States and 186 countries around the world. The TIP Report also contains tier rankings of each country on which it reports, which are used to help protect victims, prevent trafficking and prosecute traffickers.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with many thoughtful observers that the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking would be even more effective in carrying out the duties mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if its status was elevated from that of “Office” to a “Bureau” within the department hierarchy and the title of its chief administrator elevated from “director” to Assistant Secretary of State.”

Human trafficking is a problem for the United States because the U.S. State Department estimates that approximately 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States, the largest number of people trafficked into the United States come from East Asia and the Pacific and the next highest numbers coming from Latin America and Europe.

It is estimated 2.8 million children living on the streets of this nation are at risk for trafficking into the sex industry. Children who are

abused or victims of molestation are most vulnerable.

If they are lured into human trafficking they are isolated from the rest of the world and start living lives controlled by pimps, escort and massage services, private dancing clubs, pornographic clubs and much worse.

Mr. Speaker, this bill requires the Secretary of State to report to Congress within 90 days of enactment on how long each assistant secretary designation has been in existence, and whether the designation was legislatively mandated or authorized.

According to a Northwestern Journal of International Human Rights Report Mexican authorities are working to address the problem of trans-border human trafficking, but the country’s “legal framework remains largely untouched and hence limited in its crime-fighting scope and effectiveness.”

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Houston, Texas is one of the nation’s largest hubs for human trafficking, with over 200 active brothels in Houston and two new ones opening each month.

Houston has also surpassed Las Vegas for the dubious distinction of having the most strip clubs and illicit spas serving as fronts for sex trafficking.

Human trafficking in Texas is not limited to Houston. During the 2011 Dallas Super Bowl, 133 underage arrests for prostitution were made and during this year’s massive effort “Operation Cross Country” led by the FBI, several pimps were arrested.

In 2006, the Department of Justice National Conference on Human Trafficking identified the I-10 corridor as one of the main routes for traffickers. Interstate I-10 links the major Texas urban areas Houston, San Antonio and El Paso and dozens of mid- and small sized towns in between.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important things that can and must continue to be done is to raise public awareness of the continuing prevalence of modern day slavery and human trafficking.

Raising the visibility and status of the governmental entity charged with the responsibility of documenting the problems, successes, and remaining challenges confronting the United States and the international community in eradicating the scourge of human trafficking is a positive step forward in achieving this goal.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting passage of H.R. 2283.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2283, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION ACT

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4449) to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to expand the training for Federal Govern-

ment personnel related to trafficking in persons, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4449

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 “Human Trafficking Prevention Act”.

SEC. 2. EXPANDED TRAINING RELATING TO TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

Section 105(c)(4) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(c)(4)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “, including members of the Service (as such term is defined in section 103 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3903))” after “Department of State”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “Training under this paragraph shall include, at a minimum, the following:

“(A) A distance learning course on trafficking-in-persons issues and the Department of State’s obligations under this Act, targeted for embassy reporting officers, regional bureaus’ trafficking-in-persons coordinators, and their superiors.

“(B) Specific trafficking-in-persons briefings for all ambassadors and deputy chiefs of mission before such individuals depart for their posts.

“(C) At least annual reminders to all such personnel, including appropriate personnel from other Federal departments and agencies, at each diplomatic or consular post of the Department of State located outside the United States of key problems, threats, methods, and warning signs of trafficking in persons specific to the country or jurisdiction in which each such post is located, and appropriate procedures to report information that any such personnel may acquire about possible cases of trafficking in persons.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the bill, H.R. 4449, to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to expand the training for Federal Government personnel related to trafficking in persons, and for other purposes.

I thank the gentleman from New York for his leadership in addressing this issue.

As we look at this, this particular bill would require appropriate personnel of the Department of State, that they would be trained in identifying victims of severe forms of trafficking and provide for the protection of those victims.