

NOEM's bill to encourage intra-agency and effective human trafficking intervention and prevention strategies.

These two bills, as well as Representative ELLMERS' and my bill, are all pieces of a larger puzzle, initiatives that, when put together, create a comprehensive and cross-sector response to human trafficking.

We all stand up together today, regardless of political party, to say we do not want to raise our children in a world or a nation where a person can be sold as if she is property to be used by anyone to whom the trafficker offers her.

I am proud to join my colleagues and Congresswoman ELLMERS in the battle to eliminate human trafficking, for my daughters, who are 11 and 15, for my constituents in south Florida, and for the betterment of our world. I might add, as a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, I can assure the gentleman that while I share and understand his concerns on the process, as far as the appropriations, we are going to pursue unobligated funds so that we can make sure that there are the resources available to make sure that this program is funded.

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

I would like to say again to my good friend and colleague from Florida, thank you for putting forward this effort to work with us.

To my colleague, Mr. PALLONE, I, too, believe that we need to work together. So just know that my door is open, that we will continue to work on these issues together, and I am just so glad that in a bipartisan effort today we are all coming together to stand up for victims of human trafficking and again get them on a path to recovery.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), my good friend, who has been a tireless and passionate advocate for women and families and children who are affected by human trafficking really long before many of us were even aware that it was an issue here in this country.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding and thank her for her leadership, especially on this extremely important bill, H.R. 398, the Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would direct grant money to the development of best practices for medical professionals so that they will know how to recognize trafficking victims and how to respond if a potential victim comes into their hospital or clinic.

Mrs. ELLMERS and I, and others, were inspired to do this bill by a Global Centurion report, in collaboration with the Charlotte Lozier Institute, that showed some 88 percent of domestic trafficking victims sought health care at some point during the time that they were being trafficked. That is absolutely amazing. These victimized women have

come in contact with health care professionals, and then they leave and go out the door and nothing is done because the health care professional did not recognize the signs of human trafficking. They were in a clinic, hospital, or doctor's office when they were being trafficked, right back out the door to be trafficked again.

With 99 percent of trafficking victims reporting serious health consequences of being trafficked and pimps eager to get their victims healthy for continued exploitation for profit, medical professionals are on the front lines of trafficking interventions. We must make sure that the health care professionals are equipped to assist in effectuating freedom for trafficking victims whenever possible. We must think carefully about protocols for how to report suspected victims to authority. We don't want to put her in further danger. We must strategize ways to ensure the victims receive the help that they need.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very, very important bill, and I do hope my colleagues will support it. Again, I thank Mrs. ELLMERS for her leadership on it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers at this time, so I yield back the balance of my time.

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

In closing, I just want to say again how proud I am of our Congress and our colleagues on both sides of the aisle coming together to work on very, very important legislation dealing with those who have been trafficked. Human trafficking is a travesty, it is a heinous crime, and it is today's modern-day slavery.

This is something that we must eradicate in this country. This is what the American people need for us to be a part of and work on.

I am just so happy that we are dealing with an issue that is going to affect so many out there in this country who do not have a voice right now. We have the opportunity now to stand up for what is right. We have the opportunity to do what is right, and by us working together and having legislation that will be sponsored in the Senate, as many of us do, we feel very strongly that this will become law, and we will be able to enact it and help those victims so that they can be looking towards recovery and empowering their lives.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important day with 12 different bills that we are addressing. I am just so proud to be a part of it.

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

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 398, the Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act of 2015, introduced by Energy and Commerce Committee member RENEE ELLMERS of North Carolina.

I wish this bill and others related to trafficking today were not necessary. But the sad reality is that according to the U.S. Department of Justice, human trafficking is the sec-

ond fastest growing criminal industry—just behind drug trafficking. Adding to the urgency is that approximately half of all victims are children. It makes you sick.

Human trafficking is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. Too often, this is a crime that goes unnoticed and it is one that is not well understood. It is simply too hard to imagine that a crime this horrendous could be happening right here on American soil, let alone in your own backyard. But it is. Not only does human trafficking occur in the United States, it is a lucrative business with billions of dollars in profits. It continues because victims are not easily identified and they are afraid. It happens in our own communities, because we are unaware. Today, we stand up and say no more.

In order for victims of trafficking to break free, they need help. Health care professionals are one of the few groups to interact with trafficked women and girls and can be one source of help as twenty-eight percent of trafficked women sought treatment from a health care professional while being held captive. Recent studies show that health care professionals are well positioned to be first responders if they have the training and skills to identify and help victims.

The Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act would provide for the development of evidence-based best practices to help health care providers to identify and assist victims of human trafficking. The bill requires HHS to award a grant to a medical or nursing school to develop best practices for medical personnel. These best practices will be tested in a pilot program conducted at Community Health Centers (CHCs) in each of the 10 administrative regions. The results of the pilot will be shared with the medical community for their consideration. This bill offers us an important opportunity to work with the medical community to improve awareness and ensure that human trafficking education and practice becomes a part of basic health care training.

I thank Rep. ELLMERS for her hard work this important piece of legislation and urge its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 398.

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.

DEMAND THE RELEASE OF NADIYA SAVCHENKO

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for the immediate release of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who remains illegally jailed in Russia.

Ms. Savchenko was captured by Russian-directed forces in eastern Ukraine in June of 2014 and transferred to a prison in Voronezh, Russia. She is still imprisoned there today, now in her second month of a hunger strike that

demonstrates to the world the inhumanity of her capture.

We recall the shocking footage of her interrogation in which she was handcuffed to a metal pipe, and yet we are assured by Russia she is “being treated well.”

Why, if Russia is not invading Ukraine, as we are so often assured by Russia, should they hold Ms. Savchenko at all?

Yesterday, January 26, was Free Savchenko Day, a global, digital effort to raise awareness to her ongoing fight. The campaign shines a light on the disrespect for international law the Kremlin continues to demonstrate.

I was honored to participate in that campaign and introduce, along with our colleagues from the Ukrainian Caucus, House Resolution 50, calling to mind her struggle and demanding her immediate release.

The hunger strike began on December 13 and her health continues to deteriorate.

Mr. Speaker, Nadiya Savchenko has been a beacon for liberty. I salute her bravery in the face of overt Russian aggression. Her courage shines like a brilliant, brilliant beacon for liberty-loving people everywhere.

God bless her, God bless America, and God bless Ukraine.

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REGULAR ORDER

(Mr. NOLAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, since the Congress has reconvened, none of the important legislation that we have considered here has gone through the regular committee process. Yet, with each election, we send people to the Congress of the United States with a wide range of perspectives, with lots of goodwill, with lots of good intentions—Democrats and Republicans alike. The simple truth, however, is that the House leadership has prevented these voices from being heard in the regular committee process. In fact, Congress has, sadly, become one of the most undemocratic institutions in America.

Mr. Speaker, stop denying the Members of Congress the opportunity and the public the opportunity to find common ground. The failure of the process is at the heart of gridlock. It is at the heart of congressional failure. Allow bills once again to come up through the regular committee process, where amendments are heard, considered, and voted upon.

Mr. Speaker, give Congress the opportunity to work together once again in the spirit of bipartisanship that the American people are so desperately hungry for.

HONORING WILHELMINA HENRY, A PIONEER IN EDUCATION

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a pioneer in education, Ms. Wilhelmina Henry, who will be 95 years old this month. Ms. Henry is Stockton, California's, first Black teacher.

Born in South Carolina, she graduated from high school at the age of 16 and went on to earn a degree from the Tuskegee Institute—one of our country's oldest and most prestigious Historically Black Colleges. She began her teaching career after World War II in segregated schools in South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama before moving to Stockton in 1947.

Though she faced discrimination and resistance, Ms. Henry persevered with courage and dignity, retiring after almost 50 years of educating our children. Her legacy is carried on by both her daughter, Rachelle Mimms, who is also a Stockton teacher, and at the Stockton elementary school that is named in her honor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Henry's courage in breaking the color barrier for teachers and in paving the way for many others who have followed in her footsteps.

FIGHTING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, this week, as we consider measures aimed at combating human trafficking, I remind my colleagues of the estimated 1.6 million runaway or homeless youths under the age of 18 in the United States.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act was enacted in 1974 to help combat these growing numbers, and it is the sole Federal law targeting unaccompanied youths. Through this law, we are able to fund important local programs to serve our homeless youths. They provide shelter, counseling, family reunification, and aftercare, and they reduce the chance that young people will become victims of human trafficking.

I am proud to have introduced and to have helped pass the reauthorization of this important funding in 2008, but that 5-year authorization expired in 2014, and now action must be taken. Congress has a responsibility to help ensure that homeless young people in America have a place to seek shelter and to find safety while laying a foundation for new opportunities.

I call on my colleagues to join me in supporting a reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and help the hundreds of thousands of children who sleep on our streets every night.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, “Work makes you free.”

Today, I was thinking about that sign and about the psychological impact and the sadness that it must have had on millions of Holocaust survivors and on victims of the Holocaust as they walked into the concentration camps 70 years ago in Auschwitz and saw that sign, knowing they would never make it out free.

I rise today in remembrance of the 10th anniversary of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

On this day, we must take a moment to honor the memory of the millions who lost their lives and of those who survived but experienced unspeakable horrors. We must always remember the tragedy of the Holocaust in order to ensure that this dark time in human history is never repeated. Injustices and violence against any person because of one's faith, race, or ethnic background should never be tolerated. Today and every day, we must honor the memory of the Holocaust victims and ensure we renew our commitment to “never again.”

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a voice for the thousands of human trafficking victims both abroad and in this country.

Sadly, these voiceless victims are often beaten, starved, and forced to work as prostitutes or to take grueling jobs as migrant and domestic workers. Time and time again, we hear terrible stories of violence, death, and trauma against innocent men, women, and children who have been trafficked through organized crime rings and even terrorist organizations.

As Members of Congress, we must stand up for justice and human dignity. The bills we are considering today will improve collaboration between government agencies, will cut down on human trafficking, and will better protect victims. Ending human trafficking is a bipartisan issue that must remain a priority.

Our country was founded upon the notion of “equality and justice for all.” That is why I cosponsored a bipartisan bill with my North Carolina Republican colleague, MARK WALKER. H.R. 460, the Human Trafficking Detection Act, prioritizes training for the prevention and the detection of trafficked victims, and it brings us one step closer to finding a solution to this terrible tragedy of human trafficking.