

Toomey's bill does not contain similar language, potentially opening schools to litigation.

Materiality:

CCDBG precludes hiring an employee if they make a material false statement on a background check; Toomey's bill has no such materiality requirement.

THE STOP SEXUAL ABUSE BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL ACT OF 2015

WHAT THE ALEXANDER AMENDMENT DOES

Requires states to have a criminal background check for all school employees.

Allows States or local school districts to use federal funding authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education act to establish, implement, or improve policies and procedures on background checks for school employees, including:

Providing states with the flexibility and resources to conduct searches of State and Federal criminal registries, as determined by the State;

Empowering states to establish, implement, or improve policies and procedures concerning the timely disclosure, notice, and appeal of background check results;

Supporting the development, implementation, or improvement of mechanisms for assisting in the identification of and response to incidents of child abuse, including by providing training and development for school personnel; and

Any other activities determined by the State to protect student safety.

Adopts the 2014 GAO report recommendation to establish the U.S. Department of Education as the lead agency to inform schools of best practices.

Authorizes the U.S. Education Secretary to make reporting of student sexual abuse by school personnel a part of an annual "Secretary's Report Card."

Protects schools and school districts from being sued if in compliance with State regulations and requirements.

REASONS TO SUPPORT THIS AMENDMENT

It requires states to have a criminal background check for all school employees, help states and local school districts do them, but does not dictate how they do it.

It will support what most states are already doing—According to GAO, 46 States already require background checks of some kind for all public school employees and 42 States have established professional standards or codes of conduct for school personnel.

Rather than mandating a one-size-fits-all approach for 14,000 local school districts and 100,000 public schools, it will provide states with flexibility to establish, implement, or improve background check policies and procedures that best meet State and local needs.

It will support State and local efforts to increase reporting of child abuse, limit the transfer of school personnel implicated in abuse, as well as provide training on how to recognize, respond to, and prevent child abuse in schools.

It will protect schools and local school districts from civil litigation resulting from background check decisions that are otherwise in compliance with State regulations and requirements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS).

The Senator from Iowa.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the nomination that will be before the entire Senate next week, the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be the Attorney General of the United States of America, and to urge all of my Senate colleagues to quickly confirm United States Attorney Lynch to this position.

Loretta Lynch has dedicated much of her life—many years of her life—to public service, serving twice as the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York. In this role she earned a reputation as a tough but fair prosecutor.

I would like to take a few minutes to outline some of Loretta Lynch's record. As United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, she has kept communities safer by bringing serious, violent criminals to justice, prosecuting high-level gang members and drug traffickers. U.S. Attorney Lynch has also tirelessly fought public corruption. While she was at the U.S. Attorney's Office, she was the lead prosecutor in municipal corruption cases on Long Island and supervised the prosecution of the New York State Senate majority leader recently.

During her time in private practice, Loretta Lynch did pro bono work as special counsel to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, further evidencing her commitment to public service and to the enforcement of the law. Hers is a truly impressive record, and one that without question prepared United States Attorney Lynch to serve as Attorney General Lynch upon confirmation by the Senate.

I had the opportunity to meet with Loretta Lynch this past January. She and I discussed how the Department of Justice can do more to give law enforcement the tools it needs, also to eliminate witness intimidation—a major issue in cities such as Philadelphia and others around the country. Also, we talked about reforming the juvenile justice system, and finally reducing tensions between police, law enforcement and the communities they serve.

I was very impressed by United States Attorney Lynch. I believe she is well suited to address these and many other issues she will confront as the Attorney General of the United States. These issues, of course, are not only critical to Pennsylvania but also our whole country.

I am also confident that Loretta Lynch, when she is confirmed—and I believe she will be—will continue the important work of Attorney General Holder to fairly enforce Federal voting and civil rights laws, to support equal-

ity for LGBT Americans, to work to reduce the over-incarceration of non-violent offenders, and also to address disparities in our criminal justice system.

Despite Loretta Lynch's record as a prosecutor, serving twice as the United States attorney in the State of New York, and despite her record and countless expressions of support from law enforcement, from civil rights advocates, and past Attorneys General, Loretta Lynch's nomination has been pending for 122 days before the Senate. This is the longest it has taken the U.S. Senate to vote on the nominee for Attorney General in 30 years.

This is especially surprising given that the Senate has already confirmed Loretta Lynch twice. In both 2000 and 2010, the Senate confirmed Loretta Lynch to be the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, as I mentioned earlier. In each case her confirmation before the Senate was unanimous.

Loretta Lynch's nomination we know is historic for many reasons, but the principal reason is she would be the first African-American woman to serve as the Nation's Attorney General. However, apart from the historic nature of her nomination, and I hope confirmation, Loretta Lynch is supremely qualified for this position for all the reasons I stated earlier. They could be summarized in a few words: integrity, intellect, and experience. I could add more words to that, but they are the qualities we want in any prosecutor and, of course, they are the qualities we want in an Attorney General. I believe we have those qualities with Attorney General Holder, and we want to have the confirmation completed for the new Attorney General nominee, Loretta Lynch.

I strongly support Loretta Lynch's nomination, and I am pleased the majority leader has committed to considering her nomination on the Senate floor. I call on all of my colleagues to confirm Loretta Lynch without delay.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, we live in a country of unparalleled opportunity. The blessings of liberty are the birthright of every American, and the Framers ordained our Constitution to protect these rights. To deny any person these basic freedoms would seem almost unthinkable today. So the fact that even as I speak there are thousands of individuals living as slaves in our very own country is even more unthinkable. But it is undeniably true.

In this country, right now, there are thousands of human beings living as slaves, men, women, and children, stolen from their homes, stripped of their God-given rights, and robbed of their human dignity. These individuals live

among us. They live in our neighborhoods and our suburbs, our biggest cities and our smallest towns. They live in a world of silence, fear, hopelessness, and unspeakable suffering.

These individuals of whom I speak are the victims of human trafficking, a heinous and abominable crime that we should call by its real name: modern-day slavery. The State Department estimates that up to 17,500 individuals are trafficked to the United States every year. The majority of these are women and children. Some of them are forced into a life of unpaid servitude, many others into sex work. Worldwide, the International Labor Organization estimates that 4.5 million people are currently enslaved through sex trafficking. These numbers are staggering, but they illustrate the scope of the problem. The suffering of each individual victim should not be lost in a sea of statistics.

For victims of human trafficking, the surreal horror of their lives bears testimony to the gravity of the crime.

Consider the case of Holly Smith. When Holly was just 14 years old, she met a man at a local shopping mall in New Jersey. With all the innocence of youth, Holly confided in this man all the fears and anxieties of her adolescence, telling him how nervous she was to begin high school.

Holly could never have guessed that the man she had just met—the man she had just trusted with her deepest feelings—was a human trafficker trained to emotionally manipulate young girls to lure them into prostitution. This man promised Holly a life of glamor and excitement if she agreed to run away with him.

Holly took the bait. She ran away with the man who would later abuse her and intimidate her into prostitution. She was one of the many victims of child sex trafficking.

Holly eventually escaped this nightmare and even had the courage to tell her story at a Judiciary Committee hearing on human trafficking last month, but many are not so lucky. We must do more to help victims such as Holly. We must do more to combat the evils of human trafficking.

As a legislative body, we made significant progress in the year 2000 when we passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. This legislation took critical steps in providing greater protection to victims and levying heavier penalties against traffickers. We have since reauthorized that legislation on four occasions.

In each instance, I have been passionately committed in the fight against human trafficking. My staff has also been equally devoted to this issue, and I was especially proud when President Bush asked my former Judiciary counsel, Grace Chung Becker, to head the very first human trafficking unit within the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. It is only fitting that the Justice Department established this unit as a subset of its Civil Rights

Division and not its Criminal Division. Human trafficking is more than a mere crime; it is a fundamental violation of human rights.

It is not my intention to minimize the significance of the legislation we have passed thus far, but we still have so much work to do. We have recognized that human trafficking is a serious problem; now we need a serious solution.

I am grateful for Senator KLOBUCHAR's initiative in addressing that problem. Her Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act properly identifies children lured into prostitution as victims, not criminals. By encouraging States to adopt safe harbor laws, we are better equipped to help victims receive the care and treatment they deserve.

Senator CORNYN's Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act also aids these victims by establishing a special fund that will provide them more of the resources they need to repair their shattered lives. Senator CORNYN's bill also imposes severe penalties on traffickers, including heavier fines that the Justice Department will direct toward victim compensation.

I strongly support both of these bills, and I am grateful for my colleagues' enormous efforts in building a coalition to combat this scourge.

Human trafficking is a complex problem, and solving it requires a multi-front approach. It is a problem of both supply and demand. In addition to passing this legislation to address the problem of supply, we must also address the problem of demand.

The prevalence of human trafficking is a moral stain on our country, and we can never eradicate this evil if we are only addressing part of the problem.

Through stricter enforcement of obscenity laws, we can decrease demand for sex trafficking. There is an undeniable link between illegal adult obscenity and sex trafficking, and I have long been an outspoken voice on this issue.

Laura Lederer, former Senior Advisor on Trafficking in Persons at the State Department, observed that there are "numerous links between sex trafficking and pornography" and that pornography is even "used in sex trafficking and the sex industry to train women and children what to do."

In 2011, I led 41 other Senators in sending a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder calling for greater enforcement of Federal obscenity laws. In his response, even he agreed that hard-core pornography is associated with sex trafficking. This type of obscenity not only harms individuals, families, and entire communities, but also normalizes sexual harm to children.

How long will we let this culture of perversion persist? How long will we ignore the pressing problem of adult obscenity at the expense of the innocent women and children who are too often the victims of this vice?

Enough is enough. Ignoring the problem of adult obscenity is ignoring the

problem of human trafficking, and ignorance will not free the innocent women and children trapped in the clutches of modern-day slavery. The First Amendment does not protect adult obscenity, so the Federal Government is acting well within its power to impose greater enforcement. I firmly believe a consistent commitment to enforcing these laws will have a significant impact in reducing the prevalence of sex trafficking.

I want to conclude by discussing this body's handling of this important bill. In my 39 years as a Member of this body, I have seen the Senate at some of its best moments and at some of its worst moments. Last year I came to the floor repeatedly to warn of how my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—who were then in the majority—had abused the legislative process for partisan political gain.

Since the beginning of the 114th Congress this January, we have made remarkable progress in restoring the Senate as an institution. By restoring this body's traditions of fulsome debate, an open amendment process, and regular order through the committee system, our new majority is putting the Senate back to work for the American people. While the sailing has not always been totally smooth—it rarely is in my experience—the progress we have seen in restoring this institution to its proper role as a productive legislative body is real and meaningful.

Given this headway, I have been extremely disappointed to see a logjam develop and impede our progress on this vital piece of bipartisan legislation, something that should pass this body 100 to 0. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have threatened a filibuster, claiming that we somehow ambushed them with a controversial abortion rider. That claim is absolutely ridiculous. The language they are suddenly so upset about has been in the bill the entire time, as those of us on the Judiciary Committee can attest. My colleagues had no complaints about this language when the bill passed out of the committee; in fact, it passed unanimously. Moreover, not only was this language in the bill from the beginning, but it has also been the law of the land for nearly four decades.

Democrats in this body have supported countless other bills—including even ObamaCare—with similar language, knowing that such provisions are important to many people on both sides of the aisle.

This policy represents a sensible and appropriate compromise in an issue area characterized by conflicting and deeply held views. As such, the notion that this provision should provoke my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to grind the legislative process to a halt boggles the mind. It makes us wonder what in the world is going on here.

Even the most charitable interpretation of this move suggests that the minority is once again resorting to outrageous my-way-or-the-highway tactics to impose an extreme pro-abortion policy.

More disturbingly, this ploy plainly demonstrates the minority leadership's desire to pick a political fight over abortion and to muck up the majority's efforts to exercise reliable leadership. By resorting to this sort of obstruction, they have demonstrated just how desperately they want to derail our efforts to legislate responsibly and instead resort to their tired and discredited war-on-women rhetoric to win cheap political points. I am unabashedly pro-life, and I have no qualms whatsoever about debating that issue.

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are so desperate to debate that issue and push an extreme plan to overturn the longstanding compromise—that is the law of the land—let us debate such a measure at an appropriate time, but not on this bill. To hold this important human trafficking bill hostage is a deplorable approach.

The minority leader earlier came to the floor and tried to manipulate my words to support his shameful gambit. For all of my colleagues who are tempted by this irresponsible strategy, let me repeat my previous point.

It would be pathetic to hold up this bill. This bill is absolutely critical to families and our children. I cannot believe the Senate has become so political that my colleagues would raise this issue—this tangential, long-settled issue—at this time—after the same transparently clear language passed unanimously out of the Judiciary Committee.

For my colleagues to hold up this bill in an effort to seek to impose their extreme policy, to overturn the law of the land that has long enjoyed bipartisan support, to pick a false fight over abortion, or to try to embarrass the majority is itself embarrassing. They ought to be ashamed.

I urge my colleagues in the minority, in the strongest possible terms, to reconsider their position and allow the Senate once again to do the people's business.

Look, all of us are fed up with the delays and the problems of not legislating the way we should in the Senate. All of us are fed up with some of the tactics that have been used, but to use them on a bill such as this? Come on. This is a bill that will make a real difference, and there should not be one Senator in this body voting against it, and they certainly shouldn't vote against it because there is language in there that is the law of the land today.

Yes, many Democrats don't like it. But I don't like them holding up one of the most important bills for children and families and women just so they can make a cheap political point on abortion.

I care a great deal for my colleagues on the other side. They have special

concerns just as we have special concerns. They have special challenges just as we have special challenges. But this is one we ought all to agree on. Get it out of the Senate, get it going, and start doing more to stop human trafficking in our society today.

This is something we ought to all quit playing games with. Just pass it, and get it through the Senate and the House.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BLOODY SUNDAY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on Monday I gave a statement on the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday and the Voting Rights Act. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD President Obama's remarks from the commemoration.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SELMA TO MONTGOMERY MARCHES

EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE
SELMA, ALABAMA

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know I love you back.

It is a rare honor in this life to follow one of your heroes. And John Lewis is one of my heroes.

Now, I have to imagine that when a younger John Lewis woke up that morning 50 years ago and made his way to Brown Chapel, heroics were not on his mind. A day like this was not on his mind. Young folks with bedrolls and backpacks were milling about. Veterans of the movement trained newcomers in the tactics of non-violence; the right way to protect yourself when attacked. A doctor described what tear gas does to the body, while marchers scribbled down instructions for contacting their loved ones. The air was thick with doubt, anticipation and fear. And they comforted themselves with the final verse of the final hymn they sung:

"No matter what may be the test, God will take care of you; Lean, weary one, upon His breast, God will take care of you."

And then, his knapsack stocked with an apple, a toothbrush, and a book on government—all you need for a night behind bars—John Lewis led them out of the church on a mission to change America.

President and Mrs. Bush, Governor Bentley, Mayor Evans, Sewell, Reverend Strong, members of Congress, elected officials, foot soldiers, friends, fellow Americans:

As John noted, there are places and moments in America where this nation's destiny has been decided. Many are sites of war—Concord and Lexington, Appomattox, Gettysburg. Others are sites that symbolize the daring of America's character—Independence Hall and Seneca Falls, Kitty Hawk and Cape Canaveral.

Selma is such a place. In one afternoon 50 years ago, so much of our turbulent his-

tory—the stain of slavery and anguish of civil war; the yoke of segregation and tyranny of Jim Crow; the death of four little girls in Birmingham; and the dream of a Baptist preacher—all that history met on this bridge.

It was not a clash of armies, but a clash of wills; a contest to determine the true meaning of America. And because of men and women like John Lewis, Joseph Lowery, Hosea Williams, Amelia Boynton, Diane Nash, Ralph Abernathy, C.T. Vivian, Andrew Young, Fred Shuttlesworth, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and so many others, the idea of a just America and a fair America, an inclusive America, and a generous America—that idea ultimately triumphed.

As is true across the landscape of American history, we cannot examine this moment in isolation. The march on Selma was part of a broader campaign that spanned generations; the leaders that day part of a long line of heroes.

We gather here to celebrate them. We gather here to honor the courage of ordinary Americans willing to endure billy clubs and the chastening rod; tear gas and the trampling hoof; men and women who despite the gush of blood and splintered bone would stay true to their North Star and keep marching towards justice.

They did as Scripture instructed: "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." And in the days to come, they went back again and again. When the trumpet call sounded for more to join, the people came—black and white, young and old, Christian and Jew, waving the American flag and singing the same anthems full of faith and hope. A white newsman, Bill Plante, who covered the marches then and who is with us here today, quipped that the growing number of white people lowered the quality of the singing. To those who marched, though, those old gospel songs must have never sounded so sweet.

In time, their chorus would well up and reach President Johnson. And he would send them protection, and speak to the nation, echoing their call for America and the world to hear: "We shall overcome." What enormous faith these men and women had. Faith in God, but also faith in America.

The Americans who crossed this bridge, they were not physically imposing. But they gave courage to millions. They held no elected office. But they led a nation. They marched as Americans who had endured hundreds of years of brutal violence, countless daily indignities—but they didn't seek special treatment, just the equal treatment promised to them almost a century before.

What they did here will reverberate through the ages. Not because the change they won was preordained; not because their victory was complete; but because they proved that nonviolent change is possible, that love and hope can conquer hate.

As we commemorate their achievement, we are well-served to remember that at the time of the marches, many in power condemned rather than praised them. Back then, they were called Communists, or half-breeds, or outside agitators, sexual and moral degenerates, and worse—they were called everything but the name their parents gave them. Their faith was questioned. Their lives were threatened. Their patriotism challenged.

And yet, what could be more American than what happened in this place? What could more profoundly vindicate the idea of America than plain and humble people—unsung, the downtrodden, the dreamers not of high station, not born to wealth or privilege, not of one religious tradition but many, coming together to shape their country's course?