

With the proliferation of social media and the myriad ways in which we communicate with one another, traffickers have put these same means of communication to their own use—to find, target, lure, groom, victimize, and exert control over their victims. While buyers are using technology to find and purchase sex anonymously.

Traffickers have infiltrated every known form of communication—especially the sites, messaging apps, and social media platforms our children use most frequently—leaving young people more vulnerable to manipulation.

Access to the internet, cell phones, and smartphones makes it easier for traffickers and buyers to communicate with children and youth—even when they are at school, in class, or attending school-sponsored activities.

As a result, trafficking has reached the halls, lunchrooms, gyms, dormitories, and classrooms of schools, colleges, and universities in every corner of this nation.

These staggering facts and statistics led me to introduce this bipartisan legislation, the No Trafficking Zones Act, known as the Stop Human Trafficking in School Zones Act, along with Chairman NADLER and Representative MCCAUL, who I wish to thank for working with me, as well as Representative JOHNSON of Louisiana for his amendment, that included the protections for young people at institutions of higher education.

Each of us has a duty to protect young people—whether it be from drugs, gun violence, or sex traffickers. Our children deserve to be safe; and parents should know their children will be safe when they put them on the school bus or move them into their new dorms.

To be sure, H.R. 7566, the No Trafficking Zones Act, provides increased accountability for anyone who would dare interrupt or interfere with a young person's ability to obtain an education and lay the foundation for a productive future—for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

In drafting this legislation, I am grateful for the contributions of the No Trafficking Zone Initiative, Bishop James Dixon, Jacquelyn Aluotto, and Courtney Litvak, who is also a member of the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking and will participate in unveiling their Annual Report later this week.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7566, 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 OF 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7181) to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to direct the Secretary of Transportation to seek to provide for the posting of contact information of the national human trafficking hotline in the

restrooms of each aircraft, airport, over-the-road bus, bus station, passenger train, and passenger railroad station operating within the United States, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7181

*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 of 2022”.*

#### SEC. 2. POSTING OF NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING PHONE NUMBER IN CERTAIN RESTROOMS.

*Section 107(b)(1)(B)(ii) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (enacted as division A of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)(B)(ii))) is amended by—*

*(1) striking the third sentence; and*  
*(2) inserting after the period at the end the following: “The contact information of the national human trafficking hotline (including options to reach out to the hotline such as through phone, text, or TTY) shall be posted as follows:*

*“(I) In a visible place in all Federal buildings.*

*“(II) The Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall seek to coordinate with the owners and operators of aircraft, airports, over-the road buses, bus stations, passenger trains, and passenger railroad stations to place the contact information of the national human trafficking hotline in the restrooms of each such aircraft, airport, over the-road bus, bus station, passenger train, and passenger railroad station operating within the United States.*

*“(III) The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and in coordination with the heads of such other Federal agencies as may be appropriate, shall place the contact information of the national human trafficking hotline at each port of entry.”.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. FITZGERALD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. 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. 7181.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7181, the Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2022, would provide for the posting of the contact information for the National Human Trafficking Hotline in the restrooms of our country's transportation centers, where we know many trafficking victims pass through, as well as all Federal buildings and ports of entry to inform victims and those who witness suspected trafficking situations that help is available.

As I have said many times before, smuggling people across international borders is an equally troubling crime but distinct from human trafficking. Smugglers must be prosecuted, and the exploitation of their victims must not go unpunished. While many believe human trafficking happens only in other countries, the victimization of adults, youth, and children for the purposes of performing labor, commercial sex acts, and other services happens on an enormous scale in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the United States. We can document that by many organizations that are fighting the scourge of human trafficking.

H.R. 7181 would require the posting of the National Human Trafficking Hotline contact information in all Federal buildings; require the Department of Transportation and the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate with owners and operators of transportation hubs such as airports, bus stations, and train stations to post the contact information for the hotline in their restrooms; and, three, require the Department of Health and Human Services and other appropriate Federal agencies to post the hotline's contact information at every port of entry.

In 2020, more than 11,193 instances of potential human trafficking were reported to the United States National Human Trafficking Hotline.

□ 1645

Ms. JACKSON LEE. In Texas, there are reportedly 313,000 victims of human trafficking at any given time, including 79,000 children and youth who are victims of sex trafficking and 234,000 adults who are victims of labor trafficking. The victims of human trafficking tend to be concealed, living in fear and isolated, in some cases physically and in other cases emotionally.

They might remain under the control of their traffickers for a variety of reasons, including a lack of the basic necessities to escape, like transportation or a safe place to go. Some may be afraid for their safety, while others may not recognize that they are under the control of their trafficker. Even after they are rescued or escape, there is always a possibility the victims will be revictimized.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline is an essential component of the fight to end human trafficking, offering toll-free phone lines and SMS text lines that are available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. The hotline provides help, safety, and hope to victims and survivors by connecting them to the support and services they need.

They must know that they are not alone. That is the most important message that we want to give on the floor of the House today. The victims of sex trafficking and human trafficking, the children and the adult victims, are not alone.

Victims in crisis can receive assistance with safety planning, emotional support, and/or immediate connections

to emergency services, while survivors can get help in rebuilding their lives. Mr. Speaker, that is an important aspect of this legislation we are putting forward today.

The hotline also plays a vital role in combating human trafficking by helping law enforcement identify and rescue victims by receiving tips about a potential situation of human trafficking and by providing reports of tips to the appropriate authorities.

We must make every effort to identify victims and ensure victims and survivors of human trafficking are connected to services that can lead them to safety and help them begin to restore their lives. That begins with reaching them where they are and letting them know who they can call on for help without risking their safety.

Traffickers rely on our Nation's transportation infrastructure to transport their victims from city to city and State to State. In the brief moments victims are allowed by their traffickers to have a moment alone in the restroom of a bus station or airport, they may be able to call or even text for help. Victims, survivors, and concerned citizens need to know that help is just a phone call away because one call can mean the difference between life and death.

Despite the clandestine nature of human trafficking, we have learned from survivors that opportunities do exist to reach victims, and we should make the most of them. H.R. 7181, the Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2022, does exactly that.

I am very grateful to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS), the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), and the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) for introducing this strategic and practical measure.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, human trafficking is a terrible and tragic evil. We should do all we can in Congress to fight trafficking and help victims.

This legislation would change the law to direct the Secretary of Transportation to post the contact information of the National Human Trafficking Hotline in locations where victims may be able to see them and seek help.

Because this horrific crime often involves border crossings, Republicans added an amendment in committee directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to post the contact information of the National Human Trafficking Hotline at ports of entry.

It is well documented that human traffickers often use the transportation industry for both recruiting and operations. In 2020, the latest year for

which data is available, 10,583 incidents of human trafficking were reported to the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline, and 16,658 victims of trafficking were identified.

We hope this legislation will help to raise awareness about human trafficking and assist victims in seeking help by posting hotline information in places where they may see it.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, before I yield to the gentleman for his closing, I include in the RECORD the "Katy Sex-Trafficking Survivor Teams with White House to Fight Growing Threat"; "4-Year-Old Among 31 Human Trafficking Victims Rescued in Kansas, Missouri"; "Texas authorities rescue 70 missing children victimized by sex trafficking"; from the Houston Chronicle, November 23, 2020, "Report: Human Trafficking Spikes in Texas Amid Pandemic"; and two additional articles relating to human trafficking.

[From Katy Magazine News, Dec. 10, 2019]

KATY SEX-TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR TEAMS WITH WHITE HOUSE TO FIGHT GROWING THREAT

(By Natalie Cook Clark)

21-year-old Courtney Litvak of Katy hopes her experience as a sex-trafficking victim can help other young people. As the Childproof America Ambassador, she has taken her fight against human trafficking to the White House.

After a year of "grooming" from various people, Courtney Litvak, a Cinco Ranch High School student, left her Katy home. At 18-years-old, she started a life in human trafficking that lasted two years. Now, saved and back home, Courtney works to raise awareness and end this epidemic affecting students around the country, and right here in Katy.

CINCO RANCH STUDENT SURVIVED SEX-TRAFFICKING

Courtney Litvak, now 21, grew up in Katy in a loving home. She went to church every Sunday and competed on a local swim team. But at 18, she willingly left her home to enter a life in human-trafficking.

"I was groomed by multiple people over the period of a year," says Courtney. "This is such a subtle process that it's easy not to notice." She pointed out that social media is often a major form of communication and makes such crimes difficult to track.

VICTIMS LOSE ALL CONTROL

"They (victims) don't understand what will be their reality when they lose control," explains Courtney. She felt she was targeted when she was vulnerable after experiencing a traumatic event.

"I was assaulted and I became a changed person," says Courtney. "You should not go through a loss and then become a target."

CHILDPROOF AMERICA SUPPORTS FAMILIES, EDUCATES COMMUNITIES

In 2017, Courtney's mother, Kelly Litvak founded Childproof America, a non-profit organization aimed at educating families and communities about the warning signs that can ultimately save children from becoming victims of this growing trend in our country.

"It's key for people to understand this issue," says Kelly. "Every household in Katy needs to be informed about human trafficking. Denial is a coping mechanism and it's difficult for parents to comprehend.

Child and sex should never go into the same sentence. It's because of this mindset that this is a threat to Katy. These people are counting on families to be naive and it makes us sitting ducks."

INFORMAL INTERVENTIONS

In addition to her duties as spokesperson, Courtney meets informally with teens and young adults going through the grooming process or trafficking.

"A parent will reach out to Childproof America and we talk for about an hour on what they have found and are going through," explains Kelly. "Then Courtney is filled in and if the youth is willing, she will sit down with them and can help in key activities."

These meetings are very effective. Since becoming the Childproof America spokesperson this past August Courtney has spoken to about 10 students, 3 of whom were boys. Currently, Courtney and Kelly say that these sessions are seen as being 100 percent successful in getting these young people out of a harmful and dangerous situation. However, they stress that these cases will be followed up on.

"You can't help someone who doesn't want to be helped," says Courtney.

KATY-BASED CHILDPROOF AMERICA AVERAGES 2-3 CALLS A WEEK

Since Childproof America is Katy-based and many in Katy know the Litvak's story about 80 percent of their calls come from Katy residents. They average 2-3 calls a week but it comes in waves. Recently Childproof America worked with the Children's Assessment Center to host a Childproof America emergency safety seminar when calls reached a sudden increase.

"We started receiving so many calls that we felt something was going on," says Kelly.

THIS IS NOT THE STUDENT'S FAULT

"I wish someone would have looked at me and said I get it," says Courtney. "I wanted to be validated and heard, just listened to. We need to do better at recognizing these groups and knowing this doesn't happen over night and this is not the person's fault."

When Courtney was trafficked, the city of Katy and Houston community accepted that she chose this. "That is not true," says Courtney.

MASTER MANIPULATORS

Courtney describes the people involved with human trafficking as master manipulators.

"Everything is in their control," explains Courtney. "All of your decisions are theirs. You're a commodity, a property."

According to the University of Texas, more than 79,000 children are being trafficked for sex in Texas alone.

"I've never seen so much coverage especially on social media," says Courtney. "It's really a combination of more awareness being brought to it and such organizations are growing. It (human trafficking) is continuing to get more sophisticated and growing."

INTEREST FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

A major initiative launched by Childproof America is the education and outreach initiatives, specifically Family Guides, which is exclusive to their group. Family Guides is inspired by parents of victims and is designed to meet the need of families in crisis. During a time of stress and fear, families need a trained advocate who knows how to navigate the issue quickly to help. Families with minor children and 18+ are matched with a compassionate advocate who can assist with critical questions in a quick and effective fashion. It's this program that has really piqued the interest of officials in our nation's capital.

## SUCCESS IN D.C.

Just before Thanksgiving, Courtney and her mother were invited to meet with Ivanka Trump, advisor to the President. In that meeting, they discussed how the current administration could help fight against human trafficking.

"Ivanka was amazing and a champion for this cause," says Kelly. "We were prepared to present our mission in a short time."

The Litvaks say that Ivanka was interested and has followed up since their initial meeting.

"We're going back to D.C. in January," says Kelly. "We developed a true trust and Ivanka's administration has asked up for our opinions on top leaders on this topic."

## PUTTING EVERYTHING INTO PERSPECTIVE

"What we're doing really didn't sink in until I was there (meeting Ivanka)," says Courtney. "It was really emotional, which is hard for me to be vulnerable. Our trip to D.C. put everything into perspective. I'm repurposing the pain and it's the beginning of something great."

"There are so many areas where people are suffering," says Courtney. "No matter where the suffering is, I hope to help and use my platform to establish relationships with leaders to get the ball rolling."

## PASSION FOR OTHER AREAS

Courtney is passionate with other areas of service that she hopes one day to be able to work with her connections to make a difference.

"I'd love to help the homeless," says Courtney. "Growing up in Katy I could never wrap my head around it. I've seen the gap and want to help."

## LOCAL SCHOOLS NEED TO OPEN DOORS TO EXPERT TRAINING

Childproof America is working with local schools and groups to help spread their education initiative and educate people on this difficult subject.

"We have been talking to Fort Bend ISD and now they are organizing a massive training for everyone from students, parents, and teachers," says Kelly. "Every school district needs to swing open their doors to experts to train people on this subject. Schools need to get over the mindset that if they have training, people will think that they are having a problem. We need to empower the community."

## FAITH BROUGHT HER BACK

Courtney credits her faith in God for giving her the strength to stop putting harmful substances in her body and to breakthrough the brain washing to get help and leave that lifestyle.

"I'm not the first person this has happened to and I won't be the last," says Courtney. "I always want to continue to be very raw and very genuine on this subject. I'm not putting a time stamp on my service. I will always put my full heart into it but what that will look like I don't know."

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS IN KATY AND DOESN'T DISCRIMINATE

It is important to note that human trafficking doesn't discriminate. It can happen to anyone, and according to Childproof America, this activity is happening in Katy and Katy schools, like it's happening all over.

"I always want to acknowledge that everyone who's been through this does not need to talk or help others," says Courtney. "It is extremely difficult and it's a lifelong recovery."

[From Newsweek, July 1, 2021]

## 4-YEAR-OLD AMONG 31 HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS RESCUED IN KANSAS, MISSOURI (By Matthew Impelli)

A 4-year-old child was among a group of 31 human trafficking victims recently rescued by authorities in Kansas and Missouri.

The victims rescued were sexually exploited, according to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The 4-year-old was the youngest victim rescued in the group of 31 human trafficking victims, which included 14 missing children and 17 adults.

The Department of Homeland Security said in a statement that, "The operation took place June 17-26, 2021 in Wichita, Kansas, Independence, Missouri and Kansas City, Missouri."

"The results of the operation were announced by Homeland Security Investigations Deputy Special Agent in Charge, Kansas City, James Wright," the statement read. "He was joined by Heartland Anti-Trafficking Rescue Taskforce partners from across the region in making the announcement."

Along with rescuing the 31 human trafficking victims, the operation also resulted in the arrest of 82 individuals. The individuals "will be charged with crimes related to soliciting prostitution, commercial sex trafficking, sodomy, narcotics violations, felony assault on a police officer, sex offender registry violations and outstanding warrants," according to the Homeland Security statement.

Homeland Security investigators received assistance during the operation from the Wichita Police Department; the Kansas Bureau of Investigation; Kansas Highway Patrol; the Department of Health and Human Services; the United States Marshal's Service; the Platte County Sheriff's Office; the Independence Police Department; the Jackson County Sheriffs Department; Missouri State Highway Patrol; the Bourbon County Sheriff's Office and the Hutchinson Police Department.

The Department of Homeland Security did not identify any of the victims rescued or those arrested and noted that "the defendants in this case are presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial where the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt."

Homeland Security investigators completed a similar operation on Thursday in Fresno County, California. Operation Stolen Hearts focused on arresting human traffickers and child predators seeking to pay for sex with minors. The operation ended on June 23 and resulted in the rescue of 10 women and girls "from the sex trade," as well as the arrest of 21 individuals, according to Homeland Security.

The arrested individuals were charged with "contacting a minor with intent to commit a sexual offense, aiding prostitution, arranging a meeting with a minor for lewd purposes and solicitation of acts of prostitution."

Newsweek reached out to the Department of Homeland Security for further comment but did not receive a response in time for publication.

[From Fox News, June 1, 2022]

## TEXAS AUTHORITIES RESCUE 70 MISSING CHILDREN VICTIMIZED BY SEX TRAFFICKING THE CHILDREN RANGED IN AGES FROM 10 TO 17 (By Andrew Mark Miller)

Law enforcement officials have successfully recovered dozens of missing children as part of a joint task force operation in West Texas. The three-week operation, known as "Operation Lost Souls," started in late April in the Texas counties of El Paso, Midland,

Ector and Tom Green and recovered 70 children ranging in age from 10 to 17 who were victims of sex trafficking, physical and sexual abuse, according to a press release from the Department of Homeland Security.

"Operation Lost Souls exemplifies Homeland Security Investigations' commitment to protecting the public from crimes of victimization. In this case, we are looking out for our children—our community's most precious resource," said HSI El Paso Deputy Special Agent in Charge Taekuk Cho.

"HSI is committed to continue working with our law enforcement partners to locate, recover and help missing children heal, while ensuring that perpetrators are held responsible for these heinous crimes and brought to justice."

The operation was conducted by several law enforcement agencies, including the Texas Highway Patrol, El Paso Police Department, U.S. Marshals Service and the FBI.

"At the Department of Public Safety, teamwork is one of our core values," said DPS Major Matthew Mull. "We are grateful for all of our law enforcement partners who participated in this operation and who work around the clock every day to protect our communities, including our youth."

HSI added that several agencies have provided counseling to the children.

Authorities say that the children who were located outside of West Texas were found in Dallas, Texas; Colorado; and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

Federal law enforcement teams have successfully rescued missing children in operations across the country over the last few years, including in January 2021, when the FBI announced it located 33 children in the Los Angeles area.

U.S. marshals in Ohio rescued 45 missing children and 109 additional human trafficking survivors during "Operation Autumn Hope" in October 2020.

[From the Houston Chronicle, Nov. 23, 2020]

## REPORT: HUMAN TRAFFICKING SPIKES IN TEXAS AMID PANDEMIC

(By Olivia P. Tallet, Staff writer)

Texas, already the home to the second highest number of sex trafficking cases, is seeing a steep increase in crisis calls related to the illegal activity because of the coronavirus pandemic. What's more, trafficking activities are exploding online, as criminals adapt to the changing environment, experts said.

The Lone Star State is only second to California with 2,455 victims and survivors identified in Texas from over 2,000 calls to the hotline, which now includes texts and other means for victims to communicate, according to a report released last week by the Polaris Project. The calls led to the identification of 515 traffickers and 240 businesses involved in this illegal trade.

An analysis by Polaris comparing the hotline activity in three periods this year to 2019 indicates that crisis has worsened by about 40 percent, and that the pandemic has impacted the victims' vulnerabilities, as well as the manner of sex trafficking operations nationwide.

The number of cases identified through the hotline is only a fraction of the prevalence of human trafficking, which is defined as an individual being deceived or coerced into prostitution, forced labor, or domestic servitude. "Calls have more to do with people on the ground knowing about the hotline as a resource," said Ayan Ahmed, a Polaris spokesperson. "It's more about awareness."

Because Houston is considered a hub for human trafficking, the issue has gained significant awareness in the city, said Ann

Johnson, former human trafficking prosecutor in Harris County. She said hotlines might get more calls here “because our general population is more on alert.”

Elaine Andino, a director with the nonprofit United Against Human Trafficking in Houston, said the prevalence of human trafficking is hard to gauge because it's mostly a hidden crime that flourishes in businesses posing as legal enterprises or exploits victims who are too vulnerable to report them.

Andino said the most reliable study available in Texas about this illegal trade was published by the University of Texas at Austin in 2016, which estimated that there are 310,000 victims of human trafficking at any given moment in the state. Most are victims of labor trafficking, 234,500, while 79,000 are minors and youth in sex trafficking.

Victims have been driven further underground and have become more vulnerable as the pandemic forced the closure of businesses, saw many employees let go, and prompted an economic crisis, Andino said.

Many agencies providing services to victims were also impacted and unable to receive new clients, according to the Polaris report, titled “Crisis in Human Trafficking During the Pandemic.”

“There are roughly about 500 beds in the entire country for trafficking victims,” Andino said. “A lot of these shelters are restricting how many people come into the shelters to prevent COVID from spreading.”

While the pandemic closed businesses in industries where human trafficking thrives, such as hospitality, restaurants and bars, the criminal enterprise adapted by moving heavily online.

“A lot of victimization has just moved online,” said Andino. “There are lots and lots of trafficking victims who are forced to have sex on camera now; we saw a lot of that really, really spike during COVID.” Several reports point to a significant increase in porn consumption during the pandemic, with modalities such as cam sex and 3D services gaining traction.

With social distancing, many men have avoided paying for in person sex, but those who continue tend to be the most reckless and violent, “so it became even more of a scary situation for trafficking victims” vulnerability to abuse, Andino added.

The pandemics effect has increased the very vulnerabilities that put victims in the hands of traffickers in the first place, said former prosecutor Johnson. For example, some minors who are trying to escape abusive parenting get sucked into trafficking. Also, immigrants are more likely to get coerced by employers to work in dire conditions for little or no pay.

“Every victim I’ve seen, whether it’s age, race, background, the common theme, is vulnerability,” said Johnson.

Johnson insists that tackling human trafficking will require increasing services to victims and prosecuting exploiters, including sellers who profit from the business and the consumer who pay for the abuse.

“You need to continue the awareness constantly,” said Johnson. “This is not like turning off the water faucet at once.”

[From SpectrumNews1.com, Dec. 16, 2021]

TIPS FROM COMMUNITY LED OHIO OFFICIALS TO RESCUE 5 SUSPECTED HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

(By Lydia Taylor)

OHIO.—Ohio officials said five suspected human trafficking victims were rescued this month after tips from community members led them to two southern Ohio massage parlors.

The West Chester Police Department and the Chillicothe Police Department contacted

Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation in June about tips received about an illegal massage parlor. After investigating further, the BCI found connections between two parlors: The Lucky Asian Bodywork, 1532 N. Bridge St., Chillicothe location and the Lucky Asian Bodywork, 1532 N. Bridge St., Chillicothe location, according to Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost’s office.

Officials executed search warrants on Dec. 7, finding five victims who were offered medical attention and access to other resources. Victim advocates were present during both searches and talked with the women. Two women were found at the Chillicothe location and the other three were at the West Chester location.

The BCI is still investigating.

“If you think human trafficking doesn’t happen where you live, you’re wrong,” Yost said. “It happens everywhere across our state and across every demographic. It happens because of the demand, but won’t happen in Ohio without consequences—we’re watching.”

Ohio is among the worst states for human trafficking. According to data from the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, between 2014-2020, more than 1,300 victims were identified by officials. In 2019, Ohio ranked No. 4 for the most human trafficking victims nationwide.

If you are in need of help or know of someone, you can dial 911, contact your local police department or call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-3737-888.

[May 27, 2022]

TWO SEPARATE HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESCUES IN TUSCALOOSA WITHIN ONE WEEK

(By Lauren Harksen)

TUSCALOOSA, AL (WBRC).—Two teenage girls are now home with their families after calling 911 from a Tuscaloosa hotel room. It’s the second human trafficking rescue in the city within a week.

It’s an issue becoming all-too common in the Tuscaloosa area. Thankfully, the latest trafficking victims had a chance to call for help, but it doesn’t always end that way.

“It’s extremely unusual for them to call 911 and say, ‘Hey we need help,’” said Tuscaloosa Police Captain Phil Simpson.

That call was from a 15-year-old and an 18-year-old Wednesday night.

“There came a time where they did not want to go any farther with what was going on,” said Captain Simpson. “Their initial request was that we help them get home.”

They wanted to return home to their families in a neighboring state.

Captain Simpson says the two were brought to Tuscaloosa as sex trafficking victims. Unfortunately, just one week ago, a similar investigation happened in the area.

“We’ve seen a lot of this activity increasing and we believe it’s leading up to the World Games in Birmingham,” said Captain Simpson.

He is also Commander of the West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force and says when large-scale events like the World Games are right around the corner, unlawful acts tend to rise.

“The traffickers want that business, so they’re going to go where there’s a lot of people,” he added. “They’re going to take their victims to make them money where there is a lot of people.”

In this day and age, Captain Simpson says most trafficking victims are not abducted. Instead, they are coerced.

“What we see is minors who are vulnerable,” he said. “They become enamored with somebody on the internet that they think is innocent and then they meet that person and it goes from there . . . until it’s too far or too late for the victims to back out.”

Captain Simpson says the typical gateway for these perpetrators is social media. He encourages parents to keep a close eye on who your children are in contact with because you never know who’s on the other side of the screen.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as we have heard, the idea of human trafficking is not going away. This legislation, I believe, will provide us with the important instruction to give to those victims where they may find some relief.

Human trafficking is a multibillion-dollar criminal industry that denies freedom to nearly 25 million people around the world. It is an ever-present threat to the health and safety of victims, many of whom are children, but also poses grave danger to public health and safety and national security.

Although the statistics we recite daily are breathtaking, they represent a mere fraction of the instances of trafficking that occur, as human trafficking is a highly underreported crime.

H.R. 7181, the Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2022, would help identify, protect, and provide essential services to victims of human trafficking, who are often unseen, by requiring the posting of the contact information for the National Human Trafficking Hotline so that victims and anyone who sees someone who appears to be a victim know who to call or text for help.

This is commonsense, bipartisan legislation that I urge all of my colleagues to support, and I am seeking the support of my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7181, the “Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2022,” would provide for the posting of the contact information of the National Human Trafficking Hotline in the restrooms of our country’s transportation centers—where we know many trafficking victims pass through—as well as all federal buildings and ports of entry—to inform victims and those who witness suspected trafficking situations that help is available.

As I have said many times before, smuggling people across international borders is an equally troubling crime, but distinct from human trafficking. Smugglers must be prosecuted, and the exploitation of their victims must not go unpunished.

And while many believe human trafficking happens only in other countries, the victimization of adults, youth, and children for the purposes of performing labor, commercial sex acts and other services happens on an enormous scale in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the United States.

H.R. 7181 would: require posting of the National Human Trafficking Hotline’s contact information in all federal buildings; require the Department of Transportation and the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate with owners and operators of transportation hubs, such as airports, bus stations, and train stations to post the contact information

for the hotline in their restrooms; and require the Department of Homeland Security—in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services and other appropriate federal agencies—to post the hotline's contact information at every port of entry.

In 2020, more than 11,193 instances of potential human trafficking were reported to the United States National Human Trafficking Hotline.

And in Texas, there are reportedly 313,000 victims of human trafficking at any given time, including 79,000 children and youth who are victims of sex trafficking and 234,000 adults who are victims of labor trafficking.

Victims of human trafficking tend to be concealed, living in fear, and isolated—in some cases physically and in other cases emotionally.

They might remain under the control of their traffickers for a variety of reasons, including a lack of the basic necessities to escape—like transportation or a safe place to go.

Some may be afraid for their safety. While others may not recognize that they are under the control of their trafficker.

And even after they are rescued or escape, there is always the possibility that victims will be revictimized.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline is an essential component of the fight to end human trafficking. Offering toll-free phone lines and SMS text lines, that are available 24 hours a day, every day of the year, the hotline provides help, safety, and hope to victims and survivors by connecting them to the support and services they need.

Victims in crisis can receive assistance with safety planning, emotional support, and immediate connections to emergency services while survivors can get help with rebuilding their lives.

The hotline also plays a vital role in combating human trafficking by helping law enforcement identify and rescue victims; by receiving tips about potential situations of human trafficking; and by providing reports of tips to the appropriate authorities.

We must make every effort to identify victims and ensure victims and survivors of human trafficking are connected to services that can lead them to safety and help them begin to restore their lives.

That begins with reaching them where they are and letting them know who they can call for help without risking their safety.

Traffickers rely on our nation's transportation infrastructure to transport their victims from city to city and state to state. In the brief moments that allow victims to have a moment alone in the restroom of a bus station or airport, they may be able to call—or even text—for help.

Victims, survivors, and concerned citizens need to know that help is just a phone call away because one call could mean the difference between life and death.

Despite the clandestine nature of human trafficking, we have learned from survivors that opportunities do exist to reach victims, and we should make the most of them. H.R. 7181, the Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2022, does exactly that.

I thank Representatives JEFFRIES, BASS, ISSA, and MACE for introducing this strategic and practical measure.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan bill.

Human trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar criminal industry that denies freedom to nearly 25 million people around the world. It is an ever-present threat to the health and safety of victims, many of whom are children, but also poses grave danger to public health and safety and national security.

Although the statistics we recite daily are breathtaking, they represent a mere fraction of the instances of trafficking that occur, as human trafficking is a highly underreported crime.

H.R. 7181, the “Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2022,” would help identify, protect, and provide essential services to victims of human trafficking, who are often unseen, by requiring the posting of the contact information for the National Human Trafficking Hotline so that victims—and anyone who sees someone who appears to be a victim—know who to call, or text, for help.

This is commonsense, bipartisan legislation that I urge all of my colleagues to support. Thank you.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7181, 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.

#### ARTISTIC RECOGNITION FOR TALENTED STUDENTS ACT

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 169) to amend title 17, United States Code, to require the Register of Copyrights to waive fees for filing an application for registration of a copyright claim in certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 169

*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 “Artistic Recognition for Talented Students Act” or the “ARTS Act”.

#### SEC. 2. WAIVER OF FEES FOR WINNERS OF CERTAIN COMPETITIONS.

Section 708 of title 17, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e)(1) In this subsection, the term ‘covered competition’ means—

“(A) an art competition sponsored by the Congressional Institute that is open only to high school students; or

“(B) the competition established under section 3 of House Resolution 77, 113th Congress, agreed to February 26, 2013.

“(2) With respect to a work that wins a covered competition, the Register of Copyrights—

“(A) shall waive the requirement under subsection (a)(1) with respect to an application for registration of a copyright claim for that work if that application is submitted to

the Copyright Office not later than the last day of the calendar year following the year in which the work claimed by the application wins the covered competition (referred to in this paragraph as the ‘covered year’); and

“(B) may waive a fee described in subparagraph (A) for an application submitted after the end of the covered year if the fee would have been waived under that subparagraph had the application been submitted before the last day of the covered year.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. FITZGERALD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. 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 S. 169.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 169, the Artistic Recognition for Talented Students Act, or the ARTS Act, would help introduce promising young students who have won either the Congressional Art Competition or the Congressional App Challenge to the intellectual property system by waiving the fee for these students to apply for a copyright for their winning work.

I applaud the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for introducing the House version of this bipartisan, bicameral legislation with the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE), along with several of my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, including Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet Subcommittee Chairman JOHNSON and Ranking Member ISSA, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), and the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. SPARTZ).

The bill was passed under suspension last year. We are pleased today to take up passage of the Senate version of the bill, championed by Senators LEAHY and TILLIS, so the bill will pass both Chambers and become law.

We in this Chamber know just how important intellectual property rights are to our country and our economy, yet studies show that awareness of intellectual property is lacking among the country's students, even if they pursue fields that are IP intensive. The ARTS Act helps close this awareness gap early on and allows these students to participate in the intellectual property system without a financial burden.

What it also does is help build the farm team for all of those who will be protecting intellectual property in the