

S. 237

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 237, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide public safety officer benefits for exposure-related cancers, and for other purposes.

S. 243

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 243, a bill to extend the period for filing claims under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act and to provide for compensation under such Act for claims relating to Manhattan Project waste, and to improve compensation for workers involved in uranium mining.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 261. A bill to immediately halt investment by United States persons in the energy sector of Venezuela until the legitimate results of the July 28, 2024, election are respected; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in 2018, I had the opportunity to visit Venezuela. It was a once prosperous, albeit imperfect, democracy suffering from terrible economic and political decline. I told then-President Maduro that if he rigged the upcoming election, Venezuelans would be even more isolated and endure further unnecessary suffering.

It didn't stop him for a minute. He went ahead with a discredited election. The result was as predicted: The economy of Venezuela started descending into chaos. People were literally starving. There was an exodus of millions of people from Venezuela.

You might say, if you believe that the United States has no responsibility: What is it our business anyway? Countries are going to have failed governments, and so what? What difference does it make? Well, the difference it makes is the thousands and thousands of Venezuelans who were part of an exodus from Venezuela. Most of them went to Colombia and nearby nations, but many of them came to the United States. I know. I met them. They were the bus people that were sent to Chicago, for example, by the Governor of Texas, overwhelmingly Venezuelans.

How many actually came to the United States, I am not sure. I am not sure anybody really knows, but we are talking about thousands.

And at this point, imagine what we are suggesting. This man Maduro is still in control in Venezuela, and we are going to go through a mass deportation where we round up the Venezuelans who came to this country and send them back, back to starvation, political oppression.

I get it. If you are a dangerous person, you never should have come to this country in the first place. And if you commit a serious crime once you are here, I don't believe you should stay. Just that basic.

I don't go as far as the bill we considered a week or so ago. I believe that prosecution and a finding of guilt is still important in an America that is ruled by due process.

But having said that, What are we going to do about Venezuela? The same man is still there, and there have been not one, but two rotten, suspect elections in the time since I have been there.

Last July, for example, Venezuela held another Presidential election, during which the regime arbitrarily blocked the leading opposition candidates from the ballot and tried to undermine the electoral process. Nonetheless, more than 10 million Venezuelans actually voted. And results meticulously documented by credible election monitors showed a sweeping victory not for Maduro, the incumbent, but for Edmundo Gonzalez, his opponent.

I was glad to see that one of the newly confirmed Secretary of State Rubio's first calls was to President-elect Gonzalez, who actually won the election.

Despite his sweeping, clear victory, the Maduro regime has refused to give up the office of Presidency and refused to recognize the legitimate election results.

Maduro regime announced they won—actually, not true; arbitrarily arrested thousands of opponents; issued an arrest warrant for Gonzalez, which is becoming a common trick by these dictators; and refused to swear him in on inauguration day.

So today, I am introducing a short bill terminating U.S. petroleum cooperation and related trade with Venezuela until the legitimate results of the election are respected.

It is pretty simple. The entrenched regime clings to power using oil revenues, some of them from the United States. Under my bill, that comes to an end.

President Trump and Secretary Rubio could also take this step right now without my legislation, but maybe the bill will be a reminder that this is a good idea.

Lastly, I appealed to our democratic allies in the region, including the democracies of the Caribbean, to stand resolute in defense of a sweeping and clear vote by their exhausted Venezuelan neighbors. They cannot sit idly by for another 6 years of regime-inflicted suffering and collapse in Venezuela.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 261

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 ‘‘Halt All United States Investments in Venezuela’s Energy Sector Act of 2025’’.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On July 28, 2024, more than 10,000,000 citizens of Venezuela voted in a presidential election in which meticulously documented and publicized data from credible election monitors clearly and convincingly showed that opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez received more than two-thirds of the votes against the regime of Nicolas Maduro.

(2) The Maduro regime has refused to respect the overwhelming choice of the people of Venezuela and subsequently arrested and abused thousands of innocent citizens of Venezuela, including children, for peaceful political participation.

(3) Despite overwhelming evidence that Edmundo Gonzalez won a decisive victory to be Venezuela’s next president, the Maduro regime ignored the results of the election and the law of Venezuela by forcibly refusing to allow Gonzalez to be sworn in on Venezuela’s January 10, 2025, inauguration day.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON INVESTMENT BY UNITED STATES PERSONS IN ENERGY SECTOR OF VENEZUELA UNTIL THE LEGITIMATE RESULTS OF THE JULY 28, 2024, ELECTION ARE RESPECTED.

(a) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the following transactions are prohibited:

(A) Any petroleum-related transaction allowed—

(i) as a result of the Partial Agreement on the Promotion of Political Rights and Electoral Guarantees for All, agreed to by the regime of Nicolas Maduro and the political opposition in Venezuela in October 2023 (commonly known as the ‘‘Barbados Agreement’’); or

(ii) pursuant to a license issued after entry into that agreement relating to petroleum-related transactions with Venezuela.

(B) Any transaction allowed under General License No. 41 or General License No. 8M of the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury on the day before such date of enactment.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibitions under paragraph (1) shall apply to the extent provided by law and regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued pursuant to this section.

(b) NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—The President may waive the prohibitions under subsection (a) if the President—

(1) determines that the waiver is in the national security interests of the United States; and

(2) submits in writing to the appropriate congressional committees a report, which may include a classified annex, on that determination and the reasons for the determination.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may take such actions, including prescribing regulations, as are necessary to implement this section.

(B) IEEPA AUTHORITIES.—For purposes of implementing this section, the Secretary of the Treasury may exercise the authorities provided to the President under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704).

(2) PENALTIES.—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of subsection (a) or any regulation, license, directive, or order issued to carry out that subsection shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(d) RESPONSIBILITY OF OTHER AGENCIES.—All agencies of the United States Government shall take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of this section.

(e) TERMINATION OF PROHIBITION.—The prohibitions under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date on which the President submits to Congress a determination that the regime of Nicolas Maduro has recognized the July 28, 2024, electoral victory of Edmundo Gonzalez and relinquished power to the legitimately democratically elected government in Venezuela or to a transitional government that includes and is agreed to by the legitimately elected political opposition in Venezuela.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term “United States person” means—

(A) a United States citizen or alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;

(B) any entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States (including a foreign branch of any such entity); and

(C) any person physically located in the United States.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 39—SUPPORTING THE OBSERVATION OF NATIONAL TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY PREVENTION MONTH DURING THE PERIOD BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 2025, AND ENDING ON FEBRUARY 1, 2025, TO RAISE AWARENESS OF, AND OPPOSITION TO, HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 39

Whereas the United States abolished the transatlantic slave trade in 1808, and abolished chattel slavery and prohibited involuntary servitude in 1865;

Whereas, because the people of the United States remain committed to protecting individual freedom, there is a national imperative to eliminate human trafficking and modern slavery, which is commonly considered to mean—

(1) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of an indi-

vidual through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjecting that individual to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery; or

(2) the inducement of a commercial sex act by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the individual induced to perform that act is younger than 18 years of age;

Whereas forced labor and human trafficking generates revenues of at least \$150,000,000,000 annually worldwide, and there are an estimated 50,000,000 victims of human trafficking and modern slavery across the globe;

Whereas victims of human trafficking are difficult to identify and are subject to manipulation, force, fraud, coercion, and abuse;

Whereas children and youths experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable and susceptible to manipulation, making them a prime target for the lucrative criminal industry of human trafficking;

Whereas the Department of Justice has reported that human trafficking and modern slavery has been reported and investigated in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia;

Whereas the Department of State has reported that the top 3 countries of origin of federally-identified human trafficking victims in the United States in fiscal year 2021 were the United States, Mexico, and Honduras;

Whereas, to help businesses in the United States combat child labor and forced labor in global supply chains, the Department of Labor has identified 159 goods from 78 countries that are made by child labor and forced labor;

Whereas, since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline has identified 100,891 instances of human trafficking involving 197,000 victims;

Whereas there are known risk factors that contribute to youths running away, including domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and neglect, and runaway youths who experience homelessness are potential targets for human trafficking;

Whereas, in 2024, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received over 27,800 reports of possible child sex trafficking;

Whereas, of the more than 29,000 missing children reported to National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in 2024, 1 in 7 was likely a victim of child sex trafficking;

Whereas today, the average age of child sex trafficking victims reported missing to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is only 15 years old;

Whereas youth experiencing homelessness experience high rates of human trafficking, and 1 in 5 homeless youths is a victim of sex trafficking, labor trafficking, or both;

Whereas 22 percent of youths who experience homelessness were approached for paid sex on their first night of homelessness;

Whereas LGBTQ youth are at higher risk of becoming sex trafficking victims than their peers;

Whereas youths facing homelessness have a lower probability of being trafficked if they have a supportive adult in their life;

Whereas the Administration for Native Americans of the Department of Health and Human Services reports that American Indian, Alaska Native, and Pacific Islander women and girls have a heightened risk for sex trafficking;

Whereas the Department of Justice found that studies on the topic of human trafficking of American Indians and Alaska Natives suggest there are—

(1) high rates of sexual exploitation of Native women and girls;

(2) gaps in data and research on trafficking of American Indian and Alaska Native victims; and

(3) barriers that prevent law enforcement agencies and victim service providers from identifying and responding appropriately to Native victims;

Whereas, according to the Government Accountability Office, from fiscal year 2013 through fiscal year 2016, there were only 14 Federal investigations and 2 Federal prosecutions of human trafficking offenses in Indian country;

Whereas, to combat human trafficking and modern slavery in the United States and globally, the people of the United States, the Federal Government, and State, Tribal, and local governments must be—

(1) aware of the realities of human trafficking and modern slavery; and

(2) dedicated to stopping the horrific enterprises of human trafficking and modern slavery;

Whereas the United States should hold accountable all individuals, groups, organizations, governments, and countries that support, advance, or commit acts of human trafficking and modern slavery;

Whereas, through education, the United States must also work to end human trafficking and modern slavery in all forms in the United States and around the world;

Whereas victims of human trafficking deserve a trauma-informed approach that integrates the pursuit of justice and provision of social services designed to help them escape, and recover from, the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma they endured;

Whereas combating human trafficking requires a whole-of-government effort that rests on a unified and coordinated response among Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies and that places equal value on the prevention of trafficking, the identification and stabilization of victims, and the investigation and prosecution of traffickers;

Whereas laws to prosecute perpetrators of human trafficking and to assist and protect victims of human trafficking and modern slavery have been enacted in the United States, including—

(1) the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.);

(2) title XII of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-4; 127 Stat. 136);

(3) the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-22; 129 Stat. 227);

(4) sections 910 and 914(e) of the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-125; 130 Stat. 239, 274);

(5) section 1298 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (22 U.S.C. 7114);

(6) the Abolish Human Trafficking Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-392; 132 Stat. 5250);

(7) the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-393; 132 Stat. 5265);

(8) the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-425; 132 Stat. 5472);

(9) the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-427; 132 Stat. 5503);

(10) the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-103; 136 Stat. 840);

(11) the Abolish Trafficking Reauthorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-347; 136 Stat. 6199);

(12) the Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-348; 136 Stat. 6211); and

(13) the End Human Trafficking in Government Contracts Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-211; 136 Stat. 2248);

Whereas the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-22; 129