

our communities, and to keep our communities safe. Yet, they often face threats of sexual harassment and sexual assault by inmates.

A 2023 report from DOJ's inspector general found that 40 percent of more than 7,000 surveyed BOP staff reported that they themselves had been sexually harassed by an inmate. The report found that reports of sexual harassment were even more prevalent among female staff members. Mr. Speaker, 69 percent of female BOP staff said they had been sexually harassed by an inmate on the job. This harassment included whistling, catcalling, genitalia exposure, sexual remarks, and sexual gestures.

The inspector general also found the true scope of the problem is not really known because BOP has not adequately or consistently collected data on the problem. This has prevented BOP from taking effective action.

That is why the act would require BOP to fully implement recommendations made in the 2023 IG report or explain why it cannot do so. It would also require BOP to provide updated data to the inspector general on the number and prevalence of inmate-on-staff sexual harassment and sexual assault episodes, require the IG to analyze the sufficiency of the data, and make any necessary recommendations to Congress and the Attorney General on how the Bureau of Prisons can reduce the pervasiveness of these incidents.

Lastly, it would require the Attorney General to adopt nationwide standards for prevention, reduction, and punishment of sexual harassment and assault committed by incarcerated individuals against BOP employees.

By requiring BOP to fully implement the recommendations of the IG report, this act would improve BOP's data collection, training, and policies on both sexual harassment and assault. It would also require BOP to conduct regular risk assessments within individual facilities and across BOP, with an emphasis on the risks for female staff.

I applaud Senator OSOFF for his work on this legislation. He has worked to improve the conditions and safety of our Federal prisons for both the staff and inmates. I was proud to support passage of the Federal Prison Oversight Act, a bipartisan, bicameral bill that he led with my colleague, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Crime, Congresswoman MCBATH. That bill was signed into law in 2024 and established new independent oversight of BOP. It received broad support from civil rights groups, prison employees, and criminal justice groups, but its full potential is yet to be realized. Congress should fully fund the Federal Prison Oversight Act so it can be fully implemented and add to the safety improvements in the bill before us today.

We know from past failures in oversight that we must do more to make our prisons safer for inmates and staff alike. Such failures include years of

systemic sexual assault of incarcerated women and whistleblower retaliation at one of the Federal woman's prisons in Dublin, California, that led to closure of the facility and criminal convictions of nine BOP officers, including the warden himself. This never should have happened. I hope we can continue to work together to make sure our prisons are safe for everybody who enters them, whether involuntarily as an inmate or voluntarily as a staff person.

Our prisons are some of the most challenging and difficult work environments in America. BOP has faced longstanding staffing challenges, from poor morale to ever-declining recruitment and retention rates. By working to reduce the intolerable sexual harassment and assault of staff members, this legislation would take an important step toward improving safety across BOP facilities and the ability of staff to carry out their crucial public safety mission.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 307, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I should note that the bill does not address staff-on-inmate sexual harassment or assaults, but the Prison Rape Elimination Act does. Yet, this administration has been actively dismantling the protections of this legislation. I hope we can work together on that as well.

This bill would require the AG to adopt nationwide standards to prevent the sexual harassment and assaults of BOP staff members by inmates. It would also improve BOP's efforts to address this conduct if it takes place, and it will strengthen oversight of the Bureau of Prisons so we can improve the safety of staff working in every corner of the country. Nobody should fear harm of this kind while on the job, regardless of where they are employed in America.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their hard work on this bipartisan legislation. I encourage all of our colleagues to join us in supporting this legislation that has been broadly endorsed by organizations, including the American Correctional Association and the Fraternal Order of Police.

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

□ 1640

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Prison Staff Safety Enhancement Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LEE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 307.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

KAYLEIGH'S LAW ACT OF 2026

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8481) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for the issuance of natural lifetime injunctions for certain victims, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8481

A BILL

To amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for the issuance of natural lifetime injunctions for certain victims.

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 "Kayleigh's Law Act of 2026".

SEC. 2. NATURAL LIFETIME INJUNCTIONS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Chapter 238 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§3773. Natural lifetime injunctions

"(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any defendant convicted of a covered offense, the court shall, on motion of the Government (with the consent of a victim) or a victim, issue, at the time of sentencing, an order prohibiting contact with a victim. Such order shall remain in effect for the life of the defendant, subject to subsection (b). The imposition of such order shall be included in and served on the defendant during any sentencing proceeding. A violation of such order shall be punishable as a contempt of court.

"(b) TERMINATION OF INJUNCTION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—An order issued under subsection (a) may be terminated or suspended only—

"(A) on motion of the victim to whom such order pertains, alleging—

"(i) that the conviction was the subject of a pardon or commutation; or

"(ii) a change in circumstances; or

"(B) on motion of the defendant, alleging that the conviction was dismissed or overturned on appeal.

"(2) HEARING.—The court shall order a hearing on such motion, and may take evidence regarding the allegations included therein.

"(c) NO FEE.—No fee may be assessed or collected from a victim in connection with the issuance of an order under subsection (a).

"(d) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

"(1) The term 'covered offense'—

"(A) means—

"(i) a crime of violence (as such term is defined in section 16(a)) that is a felony under Federal law; or

"(ii) an offense that includes as an element a sexual act or sexual conduct (as defined in section 2246) that is a felony under Federal law; and

"(B) includes an offense under—

"(i) section 1591;

"(ii) section 2241;

"(iii) section 2242;

"(iv) section 2243;

"(v) section 2244;

"(vi) section 2245;

"(vii) section 2251;

“(viii) section 2251A;
 “(ix) section 2252;
 “(x) section 2252A;
 “(xi) section 2260;
 “(xii) section 2261A;
 “(xiii) section 2421;
 “(xiv) section 2422;
 “(xv) section 2423; or
 “(xvi) section 2425.

“(2) The term ‘contact’ means any direct or indirect communication, transmission, or physical interaction between two or more persons, including communication or interaction by written, oral, electronic, digital, or physical means, whether initiated personally, through an intermediary, or by automated or technological systems.

“(e) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing in this section may be construed to limit the application of an order under this section within the jurisdiction of any State.”.

(b) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.*—The table of sections for such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following:

“3773. Natural lifetime injunctions.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LEE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 8481.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8481, the Kayleigh’s Law Act of 2026, is about ensuring that victims of some of the most serious crimes do not have to live with the constant fear that their offender may one day contact them again.

Even when a criminal is sentenced to lifetime probation, opportunities may still exist for an offender’s supervision to be terminated, preventing offenders from being fully accountable to both their victims and society.

This was all brought into focus by one brave survivor-advocate and Arizona native, Kayleigh Kozak.

After learning that her abuser was attempting to terminate his probation, Kayleigh sought a protective order against the man who abused her as a child. However, she was shocked to learn that the court required evidence of a recent encounter between Kayleigh and this man to consider a protective order, effectively denying her request to keep herself safe and free from future contact.

Thanks in large part to Kayleigh’s advocacy, the Arizona Legislature changed State law to provide for lifetime protection orders. Wisconsin soon followed. Other States, including Texas and Virginia, also provide certain forms of long-term or lifetime protective orders.

When the Judiciary Committee held our hearing on this legislation in April, we were honored to hear from Kayleigh herself as she shared her experience and her path toward advocacy. We are equally honored that she joins us today in the gallery of the House of Representatives.

This legislation applies the same principles enacted at the State level to Federal offenders and their victims. Victims should not have to return to court repeatedly to face their offenders simply to extend a protective order. They should not have to wait until their offender attempts to contact them before they can petition the court for lifetime protection.

Restraining orders or protective orders often last for only a limited period of time, retraumatizing victims who must once again go through the court system to seek ongoing protection. The possibility of future contact can undermine a survivor’s sense of safety and make it harder to move forward.

This bill provides a straightforward and commonsense solution by authorizing lifetime no-contact orders for offenders convicted of serious Federal violent, sexual, trafficking, and child exploitation offenses.

Under this legislation, offenders may be permanently barred from contacting their victims unless the conviction is later invalidated or pardoned. The bill is rooted in a simple principle: Victims deserve lasting protection, and offenders who have committed these heinous acts should not have the ability to reinsert themselves into the lives of those they have harmed.

Ultimately, this bill is victim-centered and prioritizes public safety. Kayleigh’s Law Act helps ensure that our criminal justice system works for victims and not against them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members not to refer to persons in the gallery.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill to strengthen protection for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Kayleigh’s Law Act of 2026 would require Federal courts to issue lifetime no-contact orders against defendants who are convicted of certain offenses, including child sexual exploitation, sex trafficking, stalking, and sexual abuse, upon request or consent of a victim but independent of the criminal case.

Hundreds of thousands of people live under conditions of sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and other kinds of sexual abuse, and this legislation will help many of them escape that trap and turn their lives around.

According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, an average of 24 people every single minute become victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner. That is more

than 12 million American women and men every single year.

Nationwide, more than one in five women have been raped or subjected to attempted rape, and 60 percent of the rapes are committed by someone they know, a number that increases dramatically for minor victims, going up to 93 percent who actually knew their abuser.

The lives of survivors of sexual and domestic violence can be radically altered even long after the abuse has ended, and many suffer from a wide range of chronic physical, mental, and professional problems. They pay a heavy price financially for medical and therapeutic treatment, lost work, and legal expenses. The weight of these burdens is even greater for survivors who have fewer resources and smaller networks to draw upon.

In recent years, some States have passed laws to strengthen protections, often thanks to the advocacy of survivors themselves, like Kayleigh Kozak, who was abused by her soccer coach beginning when she was only 12 years old.

Because of her undaunted advocacy in her home State of Arizona, survivors of sex crimes and other violent crimes may now petition the court in their State for a permanent order of protection against their abusers, totally separate and apart from the criminal case.

Other States have enacted similar laws. I am proud to say that my State, Maryland, is one of them. These laws empower victims and survivors to feel a lot safer and to move forward with their lives. It is wonderful that we are advancing a version of the Kayleigh’s Law Act that will allow Federal courts to issue no-contact orders to victims and survivors of the worst offenses. I am pleased we were able to work together in committee on a bipartisan basis to ensure that this legislation would advance and prioritize the protection and the needs of victims and survivors.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 8481. I urge all of my colleagues to do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAMADEH).

□ 1650

Mr. HAMADEH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a former prosecutor and as an Arizonan who has seen what happens when the system prioritizes the criminal over the victim.

Kayleigh Kozak was 12 years old when a trusted teacher and soccer coach began to abuse her. Years later, as an adult and a mother, she was forced back into court to face him again.

In 2020, 13 years after his conviction, he asked a judge to end his so-called lifetime probation. Kayleigh was given just 3 weeks’ notice. She had to stand in the courtroom and plead for protection that should never have been in doubt.

Two times as an adult, she was hauled back to look at the man who destroyed her childhood just to keep him away. No victim should ever have to do that.

I want to thank Kayleigh, who is here today with her family, for being here. I promised Kayleigh that when I made it to Congress I would introduce this bill in her honor. Nothing makes me happier than making good on that promise. Kayleigh turned what happened to her into protection for thousands of other victims.

Arizona is proud of Kayleigh, and I am proud of her. We have three of her children here on the floor, as well.

Kayleigh's Law started in Arizona. It works. In its first year alone, more than 1,000 survivors in our State secured lifetime protection from the criminals who hurt them. Kayleigh's Law would give every American victim of a Federal sex crime or violent felony that same shield.

This bill is simple. When a predator is convicted, Federal courts must issue a lifelong no-contact injunction.

Victims should never again be forced to fill out another form, face their abuser across a courtroom, or spend their lives looking over their shoulder simply because a sentence ended and the system decided its job was done.

Healing cannot begin if the abuser can show up again the day after release. Justice is not complete if the victim still lives in fear. Arizona already closed that gap. It is time the Federal Government did the same so no American, no matter which State they live in, is left unprotected after a Federal conviction.

I have sat across from victims. I know how vulnerable they are, and sadly, how determined their predators can be. No survivor should be victimized twice, first by the criminal who harmed them and then by a system that forced them to fight again and again.

Now Kayleigh travels the country ensuring Kayleigh's Law is passed in every State legislature. It is time we guarantee that same protection to victims of Federal crimes across America.

I thank Chairman BIGGS for spearheading Kayleigh's Law through the Judiciary Committee, and I also thank Senator MIKE LEE for introducing this bill in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, this is not complicated. We protect victims. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 8481.

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

Some States have already moved to institute permanent, lifelong no-contact orders, but right now there is nothing at the Federal level that would allow a victim to receive a lifelong, permanent no-contact order, and that is what we are doing.

There is no way of undoing a violent act like a rape that has taken place in the life of a victim, but at least we can seal off the victim's future from further harassment, taunting, leering, in-

sulting, intimidation, and so on from someone who committed the crime.

I am proud that we are moving this on a bipartisan basis, and I hope that all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will vote "yes" to ensure the protection, the security, and the peace of mind that will result from this legislation.

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

Ms. LEE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, I thank a few of the individuals who helped us get to this place with this bipartisan bill—first, specifically, Right On Crime, who worked with us to develop a bill and make sure that we were capturing important concepts.

Second, I thank the ranking member and the Democrats on the committee who worked closely with us to edit, revise, and improve the bill and added important provisions. Because of our collective work together, we took a good bill, and we made it even better.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. LEE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8481, 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.

LOCAL ACCESS TO COURTS ACT

Mr. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 32) to clarify where court may be held for certain district courts in Texas and California.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 32

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 "Local Access to Courts Act" or "LACA".

SEC. 2. ORGANIZATION OF TEXAS DISTRICT COURTS.

Section 124(b)(2) of title 28, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (3), by inserting "and College Station" before the period at the end.

SEC. 3. ORGANIZATION OF CALIFORNIA DISTRICT COURTS.

Section 84(d) of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting "and El Centro" after "at San Diego".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. SCHMIDT) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on S. 32.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, local access to Federal courts is critical to ensuring the rights of the people are protected.

Under current law, the Southern District of Texas is divided into seven districts. The Houston Division comprises 13 counties but is only authorized to hold court in Houston. The Southern District of California comprises two counties, and the Court is only authorized to be held in the city of San Diego. Both of these judicial districts have experienced significant population growth in recent years, and their organization means that far too many Americans have to travel long distances for their day in court.

In both regions, Americans may have to travel as far as 100 miles or more just to reach the Federal courthouse. These distances place an unnecessary burden on those who need to access both the civil and criminal justice systems. I might say, Mr. Speaker, while I strongly support this legislation, 100 miles isn't very far to get to the Federal courthouse when you live in parts of my home State of Kansas.

The Local Access to Courts Act would help to alleviate the burden by adding an additional place in both judicial districts where the Southern District of Texas and the Southern District of California may hold court.

In the Southern District of Texas, S. 32 would add College Station to the list of places where court may be held. In the Southern District of California, this bill would add El Centro to the list of places where court may be held.

S. 32 would increase accessibility to our Federal courts for victims, jurors, civil parties, counsel, and the general public by sparing them from the burden of a multihour drive just to get to the nearest Federal courthouse.

S. 32 passed the Senate by unanimous consent, and I am glad to see that same bipartisan support in the House. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 32, which would amend title 28 to provide an additional place for holding court in the Southern District of Texas and in the Southern District of California.

Under due process and equal protection, our basic access to justice rights don't change or shouldn't change depending on where we live. But in practice, that is exactly what is happening,