

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. RES. 541

Supporting the observation of National Trafficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month during the period beginning on January 1, 2024, and ending on February 1, 2024, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, human trafficking and modern slavery.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 1, 2024

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

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## RESOLUTION

Supporting the observation of National Trafficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month during the period beginning on January 1, 2024, and ending on February 1, 2024, to raise awareness of, and opposition to, human trafficking and modern slavery.

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 individual 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 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 82,301 situations of human trafficking involving 164,839 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 2023, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received over 18,400 reports of possible child sex trafficking;

Whereas, of the more than 28,800 missing children reported to National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in 2023, 1 in 6 were likely victims 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 youths are disproportionately affected, accounting for 33.8 percent of sex trafficking victims;

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 enterprise 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 and 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 Stat. 227) established the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking to provide a formal platform for survivors of human trafficking to advise and make recommendations on Federal anti-trafficking policies to the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking established by the President;

Whereas the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration issued a final rule (80 Fed. Reg. 4967) to implement Executive Order 13627, entitled “Strengthening Protections Against Trafficking in Persons in Federal Contracts”, that clarifies the policy of the United States on combating trafficking in persons as outlined in

the Federal Acquisition Regulation by strengthening the prohibition on contractors from charging employee recruitment fees;

Whereas, although such laws and regulations are currently in force, it is essential to increase public awareness, particularly among individuals who are most likely to come into contact with victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, regarding conditions and dynamics of human trafficking and modern slavery, precisely because traffickers use techniques that are designed to severely limit self-reporting and evade law enforcement;

Whereas January 1 is the anniversary of the effective date of the Emancipation Proclamation;

Whereas February 1 is—

(1) the anniversary of the date on which President Abraham Lincoln signed the joint resolution sending the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States to the States for ratification to forever declare, “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction”; and

(2) a date that has long been celebrated as National Freedom Day, as described in section 124 of title 36, United States Code; and

Whereas, under the authority of Congress to enforce the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States “by appropriate legislation”, Congress, through the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), updated the post-Civil War involuntary servitude and slavery statutes and adopted an approach of victim protection, vigorous prosecution, and prevention of

human trafficking, commonly known as the “3P” approach: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate supports—

2           (1) observing National Trafficking and Modern  
3       Slavery Prevention Month during the period begin-  
4       ning on January 1, 2024, and ending on February  
5       1, 2024, to recognize the vital role that the people  
6       of the United States have in ending human traf-  
7       ficking and modern slavery;

8           (2) marking the observation of National Traf-  
9       ficking and Modern Slavery Prevention Month with  
10      appropriate programs and activities, culminating in  
11      the observance on February 1, 2024, of National  
12      Freedom Day, as described in section 124 of title  
13      36, United States Code;

14          (3) urging continued partnerships with Federal,  
15      State, Tribal, and local agencies, as well as survivors  
16      of human trafficking, social service providers, and  
17      nonprofit organizations to address human trafficking  
18      with a collaborative, victim-centered approach; and

19          (4) all other efforts to prevent, eradicate, and  
20      raise awareness of, and opposition to, human traf-  
21      ficking and modern slavery.

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