



**Alliance To End
Slavery & Trafficking**
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H.R. 2730

Strengthening the Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act

What does this legislation accomplish?

Amends the Social Security Act to require state foster care programs, which receive federal funds under the Social Security Act, to report in their annual plan on current efforts to address the human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children in their care; or report on their future plans to address the issue. It also mandates data collection on the issue of human trafficking.

Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to develop and publish: (1) best practices for training child welfare employees and court employees on identifying all forms of child trafficking; (2) recommendations for how state welfare agencies can prevent human trafficking; and (3) licensing guidelines for residential facilities with regard to child trafficking victims.

Why should your office support H.R. 2730?

1. The information identified by this reporting will help child welfare officials better meet their child protection goals by encouraging better identification of trafficked children, understanding their specialized support and services needs, as well as earlier identification of cases and thus greater prevention of future abuse.
2. This legislation is low-cost because it focuses on the utilization of existing resources and reporting frameworks.
3. Asking the Department of Health and Human Services to publish enhanced guidance in this area will work to ensure more uniform and cost-effective implementation at the state level.

Case Examples:

Keisha was born in the United States. As a baby, her mother left her outside a dumpster by the hospital and she bounced around in foster care programs, suffering sexual abuse at the age of 7. At the age of 12, a pimp offered her a ride in his car, got her high on drugs, and then raped her and sent her to work that night on the street. Keisha continued to bounce from pimp to pimp until she was 17 years old and sent to juvenile detention.

Mary was 13 years old when she came from Central Africa to stay with a family member who promised her an education in the United States. Instead she was forced to cook, clean, and take care of the other small children in the family 24 hours a day. She was not allowed to go to school, and was physically and verbally abused. She escaped with the help of a good samaritan when she was 17. She and her family received repeated threats from her trafficker after her escape and during the criminal case. Mary stayed temporarily in the home of a local NGO case manager because there were no safe shelter options available to her. Eventually, she was placed in the foster care system but had to move twice. She reported feeling alone and scared and that no one in this system understood what happened to her.

Maria, a 14-year-old from Mexico was promised a job as a nanny in the United States. Instead, when she arrived in the United States she was forced into prostitution through beatings and threats and raped repeatedly by her traffickers. After being discovered by the FBI and freed from her traffickers, she was placed in a foster care program. A case was brought against her traffickers in federal court. By the time the court case ended three years later, Maria had lived with seven different foster care families who struggled to understand her needs and trauma.

Please co-sponsor H.R 2730

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