

Please Take Action on Federal Human Trafficking Legislation!

Support S.2925 The “Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act of 2009”

THE TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE AND VICTIMS SUPPORT ACT OF 2009 (S.2925)

Each year, at least 100,000 children fall victim to sex trafficking within the U.S. and 200,000 to 300,000 are at risk of being commercially sexually exploited. There is very little information available about the number of adult U.S. citizen victims of sex trafficking in the U.S. Domestic victims of sex trafficking, including children, are severely overlooked in most state approaches to fight human trafficking. The Innocence Lost Initiative, created through a partnership of the Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), the FBI, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, has rescued over 1,000 trafficked and sexually exploited children to date. Unfortunately, there are only a handful of shelters in the entire country that are specifically tailored to restore the victims of this crime.

S. 2925 provides crucial funding to develop and enhance comprehensive, collaborative efforts to combat the sex trafficking, especially of children, in the U.S. It would provide six block grants of \$2,500,000 each to state or local government entities who have designed a holistic approach to investigating, prosecuting and deterring sex trafficking, and providing special services and shelter to the victims. We need this legislation!

Our goal is simple: pass S.2925 out of the Judiciary Committee, increase the number of senate cosponsors, and raise awareness about child victims of sex trafficking in the United States.

WHAT INDIVIDUALS CAN DO:

1. **Find your senator:** http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm.
2. **Craft your message** - You can use this document and the bill summary to craft your message, or customize the sample scripts below. Be concise and always ask for the senator’s support. If you have information specific to sex trafficking of minors in your state, this might be useful your call, meeting or email to your senator.
3. **Reach out to your senator in person, by phone or email** -- Urge him/her to support this legislation (you will likely meet with or talk to a staff person who will pass the message to the senator). If your senator is one of the bill’s co-sponsors, then consider calling the other senator from your state to urge his/her support. If you have time and your senator is already a co-sponsor, you may consider calling or emailing him to thank him for his leadership on this issue. Don’t hesitate, speak your voice and share your view.

These examples may serve as a guide, but please personalize your message to be most effective!

ADVOCACY CALL- EXAMPLE:

“Hi, my name is [], and I am a constituent of Senator []. I am calling to urge [him/her] to co-sponsor and support S.2925, “The Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act of 2009.” This bipartisan bill is sponsored by Senators Wyden, Cornyn, Franken, Merkley and Cantwell and currently resides with the Judiciary Committee. The bill would provide much needed grants to 6 state and local government entities to increase law enforcement efforts against sex trafficking crimes, contract with victim service providers to ensure treatment and care of child victims, and step up outreach and awareness to deter those who might sexually exploit children. The bill also calls for improvements to the National Crime Information Center system which would help law enforcement better recognize at-risk homeless and runaway youth. The companion bill to S.2925 was introduced in the House on June 23rd. I encourage the Judiciary to amend its bill to align it with the House version. Will the Senator co-sponsor and support this important legislation?”

After you make your call, please follow up with a short email to thank your Senator and restate your message.

ADVOCACY EMAIL / LETTER TO MAIL – EXAMPLE:

Dear []:

I am a constituent who is very concerned about sex trafficking in the United States and in my state, including the prostitution of children. I urge you to co-sponsor and support S. 2925, “The Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act of 2009” sponsored by Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), John Cornyn (R-TX), Al Franken (D-MN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Maria Cantwell (D-WA). This bipartisan bill currently resides in the Judiciary Committee. The companion bill to S.2925 was introduced in the House on June 23rd. I encourage the Judiciary to amend its bill to align it with the House version.

An estimated 100,000 children are exploited through prostitution every year in the United States. The average age a child is first prostituted is 13. Due to the violence they endure, these children are known to suffer from post-traumatic stress, sexually transmitted infections, substance abuse, and long-term health problems. Without access to a safe place and proper treatment, these victims are at risk of returning to their abusive trafficking situation.

Today, there is a severe lack of services for child sex trafficking victims in the United States. S.2925 helps address this by supporting holistic, multidisciplinary approaches that bring law enforcement, non-profits and agencies together to combat the problem. Block grants will fund

collaborative programs in six regionally diverse areas across the U.S. Each grant will help increase victim services while increasing law enforcement resources to investigate and prosecute traffickers. Outreach and awareness efforts are also supported. The bill also makes improvements to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system which can better track homeless and runaway youth who are extremely vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation.

Thank you for acting to protect our state's and our nation's children and to stop sex trafficking.

Sincerely,
[]

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS CAN DO:

- Urge everyone you know to contact their federal senators and urge them to cosponsor S. 2925. Please feel free to send this advocacy document and the summary for S.2925 to your network.
- Contact Kaylan Sliney by July 14th at ksliney@polarisproject.org to have your organization/agency listed on the support letters to the committee.
- **Schedule a meeting in your senators' district (home state) office.** Personal visits with your senator or his or her staff are the most effective means of getting your message across. Therefore take advantage of your senators' state office by gathering a few local advocates and making an appointment to speak with a member of the senator's staff to urge the Senator to support and cosponsor S. 2925.
- More information to come on a briefing scheduled for July 19th in Washington, DC. We will send details as soon as we have them.
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More information and What Else You Can Do!

- **1st Tier Targets:** Chairman Leahy (VT), Ranking Member Sessions (AL), Senator Feinstein (CA) and Senator Coburn (OK). If one of these senators represents your state, it is terribly important they hear from advocates like you.
- **2nd Tier Targets:** All members of the committee are important in our effort to build support and move the bill out of Judiciary. Look for your senator's name on the committee and let him/her know why S.2925 is needed (see below)
- **3rd Tier Targets:** All senators should be urged to co-sponsor S. 2925. Having a large number of cosponsors demonstrates strong support for the bill, and increases its chance of passage.

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS: TARGETS FOR S.2925

Chairman, Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)

Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-CA)
Sen. Ted Kaufman (D-DE)
Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL)
Sen. Benjamin Cardin (D-MD)
Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
Sen. Al Franken (D-MN)
Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY)
Sen. Arlen Specter (D-PA)
Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)
Sen. Herb Kohl (D-WI)
Sen. Russ Feingold (D-WI)

Ranking Member Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL)

Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ)
Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA)
Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK)
Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)
Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX)
Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT)

Pass this information to your friends and neighbors and urge them to join the fight!