



Trafficking in Women and Girls: Help Stop this Horrible Abuse Support the International Violence Against Women Act

Millions of people every year are trafficked internationally into modern slavery including horrific conditions of sexual exploitation or shocking forced labor conditions. The Department of State’s Trafficking in Person’s Report for 2010 notes that traffickers “often use sexual violence as a weapon against women to keep them in compelled service, whether in a field, a factory, a brothel, a home, or a war zone.”

Women and girls are especially vulnerable to trafficking. Lack of access to education, persistent discrimination, economic hardship and poverty often contribute to create conditions where women and girls are disproportionately affected by trafficking. Under such conditions women and girls are lured through false promises of good working conditions at relatively high paying jobs or in some cases girls are sold by poor families, only to find themselves caught in a net of sexual exploitation or forced or bonded labor.

The **International Violence Against Women Act (H.R. 4594/S.2982)** builds on U.S. efforts to end violence against women and girls including human trafficking. Over 150 U.S. groups – including faith-based, human rights, refugee and women’s organizations – contributed IVAWA and support its passage. Whether the goal is to stop trafficking in women and girls, female genital mutilation, attacks on girls going to school, violence in the home, or rape as a weapon of war, IVAWA elevates this issue to be a greater priority in U.S. foreign policy and improves U.S. programs to make them more efficient and effective. IVAWA will:

- Direct the State Department and U.S. AID to coordinate U.S. approaches and, in the first year of implementation, to develop a strategy for stopping violence against women and girls. The strategy will be informed by research and best practices, coordinate programs across relevant sectors, and include data collection to assess success and transparency measures to track funds.
- Integrate this issue into relevant U.S. programs so that, for example, programs to build schools also include efforts to ensure girls arrive safely and remain safe at school; service providers working with persons with HIV and AIDS are also trained to recognize signs of violence and support women who face violence; officers who train foreign security personnel include instruction to stop violence against women.
- Integrate this concern when the U.S. responds to humanitarian crises so that U.S. efforts take into account, for example, how to protect women and girls who are especially vulnerable to attacks in camps for refugees or internally displaced people or support survivors of sexual violence.
- Instruct U.S. AID and the Department of State to undertake pilot programs in select countries that are identified in the strategy, created and implemented in collaboration with local partners, and include mechanisms to collect data on outcomes and track the use of any U.S. funds.

Help end violence against women and girls by improving U.S. diplomacy and making U.S. foreign assistance programs more effective and efficient. **Support the International Violence Against Women Act (H.R. 4594/S.2982).**