

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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DELEGATE JAMES MOYLAN INTRODUCES THE C.H.I.L.D Act of 2023

(Washington D.C.). Today, Congressman James Moylan (GU-00) along with Co-Lead Congressman Don Davis (NC-01), Congressman Buddy Carter (GA-01), Congresswoman Diana Harshbarger (TN-01), Congressman Don Bacon (NE-02) and Congresswoman Aumua Amata Radewagen (AS-00) introduced the C.H.I.L.D Act of 2023.

This bill seeks to amend chapter 77, sec 1591 of title 18, United States Code, by raising the mandatory minimum years of imprisonment for engaging in the trafficking of any persons under the age of 18. The current law states that if convicted of trafficking a victim under the age of 14, there is a minimum of 15 years imprisonment. If convicted of trafficking a victim between 14 and 17 the minimum sentence is 10 years imprisonment.

Child sex trafficking unfortunately remains a pressing issue in the United States. In 2021, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) received over 17,200 reports of child sex trafficking in all 50 U.S. states, affecting every type of community including cities, rural areas, and tribal land. According to a NCMEC report from 2021, out of the 25,000 missing runaway children, one out of six are likely to be victims of sex trafficking.

Offenders often target vulnerable children who are of lower income, live in dangerous circumstances, and seek out better lives for themselves. Victims come from all backgrounds and become trapped in a never-ending cycle of threats, abuse, false promises, isolation, shame, and debt. These victims are deprived of something every child deserves: *a future*.

This legislation would

- Make the sentence for traffickers exploiting victims under the age of 18 the same regardless of their age. A child is still a minor and there should not be differentiation.
- Increase the minimum sentence to 25 years for those who are convicted of child trafficking. This will convey the serious nature of their crime and ensure that traffickers know they will be punished if they continue to exploit minors.

By enacting more stringent penalties, this bill aims to bring justice for the victims and families affected by child trafficking and issues a strong statement to traffickers, who leave a lifetime of scars on innocent children.

“My message is clear, sex trafficking is a heinous crime that will not be tolerated. Current laws are too soft on these criminals. I am committed to ensuring stricter laws and harsher punishments are implemented for anyone who harms innocent children. If enacted, this law would send out a strong message to those who engage in child sex trafficking.” stated Delegate Moylan.

“Anyone who is found guilty of trafficking children must face justice,” said Congressman Davis. “That is why I am proud to cosponsor the Combating Human-Trafficking of Innocent Lives Daily (C.H.I.L.D.) Act, much-needed

legislation that increases criminal punishment for human traffickers. Congress must protect our children from exploitation, sexual abuse, and other unspeakably evil acts at all costs.”

*“Human trafficking is one of the greatest crimes imaginable, yet it is a sad reality that we must defeat. Thank you to Congressman Moylan for his leadership on this important issue as we fight for the lives and futures of vulnerable children.” said **Congresswoman Aumua Amata Radewagen**.*

*“Those engaged in trafficking innocent children and should be punished to the fullest extent of the law,” said Bacon. “Anyone under the age of 18 is particularly vulnerable, and we should be making every effort to protect minors from this evil, and raising the mandatory minimum sentencing will help protect children” said **Congressman Don Bacon**.*

*“Joe Biden’s open borders policies continue to aid cartels and criminals in their human trafficking operations, and are putting the lives of American children at risk,” said **Congresswoman Diana Harshbarger**. “I am honored to join my colleagues in support of the CHILD Act, a critical piece of legislation which will increase the minimum prison sentences for child traffickers and deter traffickers from operating within our communities, from the Southern Border to East Tennessee.”*

*“Stealing a child’s future is an unforgivable act. This bill will bring justice to the millions of innocent families and victims who have been abused by human traffickers by ensuring that these criminals are punished to the fullest extent possible,” said **Congressman Buddy Carter**.*

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