

# INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION®

*Summer 2013: In-District Meetings*



## Talking Points for Lobby Meetings with Senate and House Offices

**Connection:** Introduce yourself and the people in your group.

Say where you live, and your connection to the community. Share briefly why you care about trafficking and slavery. Let them know you are there to discuss the issue of U.S. leadership in the fight against modern-day slavery, and that you'd like to ask for their support on a specific bill (HR 2283/ S. 1249).

**Context:** Provide a brief overview of the problem.

- There are an estimated 27 million slaves worldwide, which is more than any other time in history, including all four hundred years of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The crime generates an estimated \$32 billion for traffickers every year.
- The good news is that **it is actually possible to combat this crime successfully**. In 2000, Congress established the Office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons (TIP). This small but effective office has funded dozens of proven anti-trafficking models around the world that have rescued and restored victims, brought perpetrators of slavery to justice, and protected whole communities by deterring trafficking and slavery.
  - **International Justice Mission**, for example, has benefitted from TIP grants in South and East Asia that have resulted in thousands being freed from slavery. [You can show this video to illustrate the impact of the TIP Office:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TApP70sMj5w>]
- One of the ways that the TIP Office leads the U.S. fight against slavery internationally is by publishing the annual TIP Report, which ranks 180 countries on the basis of how well they're addressing human trafficking and slavery issues within their own borders. Through the annual TIP Report, the U.S. is able to leverage its diplomatic leadership on human trafficking to pressure countries to improve their efforts to fight the crime.
- However, because the TIP Office is an *office* and not a *bureau* within the State Department, the Ambassador who directs the Office does not have direct access to the Secretary of State. The Ambassador and his staff are our government's leading experts on slavery, but they are currently left out of important conversations. For example, when anti-trafficking "tier rankings" are determined for the TIP Report, political considerations sometimes outweigh the facts about a country's anti-trafficking performance.

- The State Department office that is most expert on modern-day slavery should at least have a seat at the table where important decisions are made. This office speaks up for the most marginalized people on the planet—their voice needs to be as powerful as it can possibly be. This small—and free—change would make a big difference for those living in slavery today.

**Commitment: Make the TIP Office to a State Department Bureau**

- **Please support the Trafficking in Persons Office being upgraded to a State Department Bureau so that it can do the job Congress intended even more successfully. H.R. 2283 and S. 1249 upgrade the TIP Office to a State Department Bureau. Both bills are budget neutral.**
- **For House meetings: Ask your Representative to cosponsor H.R.2283, the “Human Trafficking Prioritization Act.”**
  - House offices can join as co-sponsors of HR2283 by contacting Alison Hollabaugh in the office of Congressman Chris Smith.
- **For Senate meetings: Ask your Senator to co-sponsor S. 1249, “To rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.” This bi-partisan bill was introduced by Senators Blumenthal, Collins, Portman, Crapo, Kirk, and Shaheen.**
  - Interested Senate offices can contact Joel Cohen in Senator Richard Blumenthal’s office.

**Catapult: Leave on a positive note, and establish a clear plan.**

- Thank the member of Congress or aide for their time.
- Establish a clear follow-up plan and timeline. “May I check back with you in a couple weeks?” Is there any additional information you can provide that would be helpful?