

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2283

To prioritize the fight against human trafficking within the Department of State according to congressional intent in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 without increasing the size of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To prioritize the fight against human trafficking within the Department of State according to congressional intent in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 without increasing the size of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Human Trafficking
5 Prioritization Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The International Labor Organization esti-
4 mates that nearly 21,000,000 people are subjected
5 to modern slavery around the world at any given
6 time and that the majority of the enslaved are
7 women and girls.

8 (2) Congress authorized the creation of a De-
9 partment of State Office to Monitor and Combat
10 Trafficking in Persons in the Trafficking Victims
11 Protection Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-386) in
12 order to directly assist the Secretary of State in his
13 or her effort to coordinate a United States Govern-
14 ment interagency response to domestic and inter-
15 national trafficking in persons.

16 (3) The Office to Monitor and Combat Traf-
17 ficking in Persons monitors trafficking worldwide
18 and produces the online and printed versions of the
19 annual Trafficking in Persons Report, which is Con-
20 gress' primary resource for human trafficking re-
21 porting, analysis, and recommendations on the
22 United States and 186 countries around the world.

23 (4) The annual Trafficking in Persons Report
24 contains tier rankings of each country on which it
25 reports, and these tier rankings have become an es-
26 sential diplomatic tool for promoting protection for

1 victims, prevention of trafficking, and prosecution of
2 perpetrators.

3 (5) Some countries have openly stated, and
4 many others have confided, that dramatic improve-
5 ments in the country's human trafficking record
6 were directly related to avoidance of a low tier rank-
7 ing in the annual Trafficking in Persons Report.

8 (6) Ambassador Mark Lagon, former Amba-
9 sador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking
10 in Persons (2007–2009), testified before the Sub-
11 committee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human
12 Rights, and International Organizations of the Com-
13 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
14 resentatives on April 18, 2013, that “[T]he State
15 Department does a tremendous job in producing a
16 report which tells it like it is, offering objective
17 rankings. Yet at times it pulls punches, typically due
18 to the urging of regional specialists rather than the
19 TIP Office's dedicated experts on trafficking.”.

20 (7) Ambassador John Miller, former Amba-
21 sador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking
22 in Persons (2002–2006), recently stated that, “Up-
23 grading the status of the Office to a Bureau will not
24 create additional bureaucracy—it will simply give
25 JTIP and the Ambassador-at-large who heads it

1 equal standing with regional and functional bureaus
2 at the State Department. That standing is abso-
3 lutely essential for the issue to remain a priority, es-
4 pecially when multiple U.S. interests are engaged.”.

5 (8) The tier ranking process authorized by Con-
6 gress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of
7 2000 has been in some instances compromised by
8 the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking subor-
9 dinate stature within the Department of State.

10 (9) It is essential for Congress and the Sec-
11 retary of State to be accurately informed regarding
12 United States and foreign country successes and
13 failures in the fight against human trafficking.

14 (10) The diplomatic power and credibility of the
15 Trafficking in Persons Report is based on rigorous
16 scholarship and scrupulous application of the min-
17 imum standards for the elimination of human traf-
18 ficking and is undermined by political, rather than
19 factual, tier rankings.

20 (11) Strong and effective anti-slavery policy re-
21 quires that officials from the Office to Monitor and
22 Combat Trafficking have equal hierarchical standing
23 with State Department regional bureaus and direct
24 access to the Secretary of State.

1 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

2 It is the Sense of Congress that—

3 (1) the Office to Monitor and Combat Traf-
4 ficking of the Department of State will be more ef-
5 fective in carrying out duties mandated by Congress
6 in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if
7 the Office status is changed to that of a Bureau
8 within the Department hierarchy;

9 (2) the Office to Monitor and Combat Traf-
10 ficking will be more effective in carrying out duties
11 mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims
12 Protection Act of 2000 if the Office is headed by an
13 Assistant Secretary with direct access to the Sec-
14 retary of State, rather than an Ambassador-at-
15 Large; and

16 (3) the change in status from Office to Monitor
17 and Combat Trafficking with an Ambassador-at-
18 Large to a Bureau led by an Assistant Secretary can
19 be accomplished without increasing the number of
20 personnel or the budget of the current Office.

21 **SEC. 4. OFFICE TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 105(e) of the Trafficking
23 Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(e)) is
24 amended—

25 (1) in the heading, by striking “OFFICE TO
26 MONITOR AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING” and insert-

1 ing “BUREAU TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PER-
2 SONS”;

3 (2) in paragraph (1)—

4 (A) in the first sentence, by striking “Of-
5 fice to Monitor and Combat Trafficking” and
6 inserting “Bureau to Combat Trafficking in
7 Persons”;

8 (B) in the second sentence,—

9 (i) by striking “Office” and inserting
10 “Bureau”;

11 (ii) by striking “Director” and insert-
12 ing “Assistant Secretary of State”; and

13 (iii) by striking “, with the rank of
14 Ambassador-at-Large”; and

15 (C) in the third sentence, by striking “Di-
16 rector” and inserting “Assistant Secretary of
17 State”;

18 (D) in the fourth sentence, by striking
19 “Director” and inserting “Assistant Secretary
20 of State”;

21 (E) in the fifth sentence, by striking “Di-
22 rector” and inserting “Assistant Secretary of
23 State”; and

24 (F) in the sixth sentence, by striking “Of-
25 fice” and inserting “Bureau”; and

1 (3) in paragraph (2)—

2 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “Of-
3 fice to Monitor and Combat Trafficking” and
4 inserting “Bureau to Combat Trafficking in
5 Persons”; and

6 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “Di-
7 rector” and inserting “Assistant Secretary of
8 State”.

9 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Any reference in the Traf-
11 ficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 or in any
12 other Act to—

13 (A) the Office to Monitor and Combat
14 Trafficking shall be deemed to be a reference to
15 the Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons;
16 and

17 (B) the Director or Ambassador-at-Large
18 of the Office to Monitor and Combat Traf-
19 ficking in Persons shall be deemed to be a ref-
20 erence to the Assistant Secretary directing the
21 Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

22 (2) STATE DEPARTMENT BASIC AUTHORITIES
23 ACT OF 1956.—Section 1(c)(1) of the State Depart-
24 ment Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C.

- 1 2651a(c)(1)) is amended, in the first sentence, by
- 2 striking “24” and inserting “25”.