

## **Long's Short Report – Continuing the fight against human trafficking**

By Rep. Billy Long

As much as the media likes to portray Congress as Republican vs. Democrat, there are a number of areas where we agree and can come together for the common good. One of those areas is the fight against human trafficking. Since just before Christmas, President Trump has signed several bills into law that combat this heinous crime both domestically and internationally.

This billion-dollar industry affects every part of the world. According to the most recent estimates, there are nearly 25 million victims of human trafficking internationally, with 25 percent of those victims being children. It's the third largest crime industry in the world, right behind illegal drugs and arms trafficking. These devastating numbers are just a glimpse of this horrific tragedy.

Sadly, the numbers in the U.S. are just as devastating. According to the State Department, anywhere between 600,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked in the U.S. each year. In 2018 alone, more than 5,000 cases were reported to the National Human Trafficking hotline, with 72 of those cases coming from my home state of Missouri.

Thanks to our work in Congress from both sides of the aisle, the fight to end this egregious practice isn't going away. We are doing our best to combat this scourge. Over the last two months we've seen a number of bills signed into law, including S. 1862, the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, S. 1311, the Abolish Human Trafficking Act, H.R. 2200, the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act and S. 1312, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

All four bills work to increase protections and programs for both victims and survivors while also establishing new prevention, prosecution and collaboration methods to ensure that those responsible for these heinous crimes are brought to justice. While the majority of these bills focus on combating human trafficking at home, S. 1862 works to combat human trafficking abroad. Specifically, this bill will strengthen the criteria to ensure countries are meeting minimum standards to help eradicate this crime. The criteria includes a country's ability and willingness to prohibit, prosecute and punish human traffickers.

All four bills were a step in the right direction, but there is still more work that needs to be done. I look forward to working with my colleagues in a bipartisan fashion. along with President Trump, as we continue the fight against human trafficking.

For more information on my activities in our district and in Washington, I encourage you to follow my Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Rep.Billy.Long> and my Twitter page at <https://twitter.com/USRepLong>. You can also subscribe to my weekly newsletter, "Long's Short Report," by visiting <https://longforms.house.gov/newsletter-and-email-updates-form>