

Your Voice Must Be Heard

[October 21, 2005] The Presbyterian Church (USA) joins with Vital Voices Global Partnership to encourage action on this issue. For more information contact vitalvoices@democracyinaction.org

On October 7, the U.S. anti-trafficking movement secured a historic achievement. Five years after the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children was adopted in the year of 2000, the United States Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification of this trafficking in persons protocol. The protocol, which supplements the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, is an important multilateral component of the worldwide effort to combat human trafficking. It seeks to prioritize anti-trafficking efforts by supporting increased efforts to protect victims, prosecute traffickers and prevent trafficking, as well as promote further collaboration among nations in fighting trafficking.

While we are pleased to see the Senate take concrete action to combat trafficking in persons, much more remains to be done.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), first passed in 2000 and reauthorized in 2003, expired at the end of September. This landmark piece of legislation must be reauthorized if the United States government is to sustain and continue its efforts to counter human trafficking. Unfortunately, the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act 2005 (TVPRA 2005) has not yet been passed by the House of Representatives and has not yet been introduced in the Senate.

The TVPRA 2005 endeavors to combat international trafficking by addressing the needs of vulnerable populations in post-conflict settings. It will also intensify the federal government's response to domestic trafficking by extending assistance to domestically trafficked victims and increasing the protection offered to juvenile victims. Lastly, it will expand U.S. criminal jurisdiction for felony offenses committed by U.S. government personnel and contractors stationed abroad to ensure that all those involved in human trafficking activities are held accountable for their crimes.

It is essential that the TVPRA 2005 be authorized in order to maintain the flourishing progress of American anti-trafficking initiatives and craft an effective response to under-addressed aspects of the trafficking problem across the globe.

To secure the continued commitment of the U.S. government in combating trafficking, your voice must be heard. Please ask your congressional representatives to support TVPRA 2005.

Thank you for your continued participation in the fight against human trafficking.

Vital Voices Global Partnership

http://www.demaction.org/dia/organizations/vitalvoices/campaign.jsp?campaign_KEY=851

Take Action Against Human Trafficking:

1. Urge your representatives to support TVPRA 2005. Use this PresbyLegislative Action Center to contact your elected officials to introduce a bill in the Senate and support the one in the House.

2. Watch Lifetime Television original miniseries, Human Trafficking, on October 24 and 25, 9 PM (EI/PT).

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