

Sadly, the logic of dominion and disregard for human life fuels the scourge of human trafficking. Geopolitical instability and armed conflicts create fertile ground for traffickers to exploit the most vulnerable, especially displaced persons, migrants and refugees.

— Pope Leo XIV, World Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking,
Jan. 29, 2026

Urge Passage of Anti-Trafficking Bill

As we commemorate [World Day Against Trafficking in Persons](#) today, we are reminded of the Sisters of Mercy's founder, Catherine McAuley, who sought to protect vulnerable young women from dangerous working conditions. In her honor, we invite you to advocate for the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2025 (H.R. 1144).

You may send a message to your U.S. Representatives [here](#).

[This bill](#) reauthorizes programs and activities that combat international trafficking; establishes a new program to help victims of trafficking; and updates various elements of the federal framework to combat international trafficking. You may send a message to your U.S. representatives in the box to the right on a computer, or below on a mobile device.

Specifically, this bill reauthorizes through FY2029 programs and activities at various federal departments and agencies to combat international trafficking and reduce the prevalence of modern slavery. The bill also reauthorizes International Megan's Law through FY2029. Among its provisions, the law requires sex offenders to provide certain information about their intended travel outside of the United States.

Additionally, the bill authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to carry out a new program to help victims of trafficking integrate or reintegrate into society.

The bill requires the Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report to include information about trafficking in persons for the purposes of organ removal.

Finally, the bill requires counter-trafficking strategies, activities, and efforts to be further incorporated into U.S. foreign assistance.

Answering the call of the Prince of Peace,
Mercy Justice Team

Background

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was originally passed in 2000 and provided federal agencies with new tools and resources to mount a comprehensive and coordinated campaign to eliminate modern forms of domestic and international slavery. It is most commonly known for its structure of the 3 Ps - protection, prevention, and prosecution. The TVPA must be re-authorized (i.e., reapproved) to remain in effect. The law has been amended multiple times since its enactment to enhance protections, re-authorize funding and make necessary updates.

This is a highly bi-partisan bill. As of July 1, 2026, NJ Republican Chris Smith is sponsoring the bill with 13 Republican and 12 Democrat co-sponsors. If it comes to the floor, it will most likely pass. We urge House members to pass the bill as is, without amendments. At the present time, there is no companion bill in the Senate. Sponsors are hoping that once passed, H.R. 1144 will move to the Senate.

Consider joining the Sisters of Mercy and over fifty other congregations of women religious in the Nuns Against Gun Violence coalition for prayer, advocacy opportunities, and education. Send an email to nunsagainstgunviolence@gmail.com.

[Bing Videos](#)

[H.R. 1144: Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2025 | Modern Action](#)
<https://modernaction.io/blog/bills/hr1144-frederick-douglass-trafficking-victims-prevention>