

Update: Federal Legislation to Combat Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery
Sent: Friday, September 23, 2011



Shared Hope International launched the [Protected Innocence Initiative](#) in December 2010 to provide a comprehensive strategy to fight domestic minor sex trafficking at the state level. Now, nearly nine months into the initiative, we have released report cards in Arizona, Texas, Washington, and Oregon and conducted a very [successful billboard campaign](#) in Seattle, WA, bringing much needed attention to this often overlooked issue. As we work to analyze and evaluate state laws to provide states with a legislative blueprint for action, we continue to be actively engaged in federal policy initiatives.

TAKE ACTION!

Call or e-mail your [U.S. Representative](#) and [Senator](#) today to urge them to co-sponsor and vote in support of these critical bills. To follow the development of state and federal legislation and the Shared Hope Protected Innocence Initiative, become our fan on [Facebook](#) now.



Federal Legislation Highlights

The cornerstone of anti-trafficking efforts, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, reauthorized in 2005 and 2008, is again up for reauthorization in this session. The [TVPRA of 2011, S. 1301](#), was introduced in the Senate on June 29, 2011, by Senators Leahy (D-VT), Brown (R-MA), Kerry (D-MA), Boxer (D-CA), Cardin (D-MD), and Wyden (D-OR). The [TVPRA of 2011, H.R. 2830](#), was introduced in the House by Representatives by Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Howard Berman (D-CA) on August 30, 2011. These bills will renew the TVPA of 2000, which establishes trafficking as a federal crime, provides victim assistance programs, and authorizes both the State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and the annual Trafficking in Persons report. The Senate and House bills include provisions to strengthen global and domestic anti-trafficking programs through the Departments of State, Justice, Health and Human Services, Labor and Defense.

Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and John Cornyn (R-TX) have reintroduced the [Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act, S. 596 \(bill summary\)](#), which came so close to passing in the last session. The bill will establish a grant program for victims of domestic minor sex trafficking by awarding block grants to up to six state or local governments to combat sex trafficking of minors. These grants are to be used to provide shelter to minor victims of trafficking, case management services, mental health counseling, legal services, and outreach and education programs. In addition, the bill outlines better processes for tracking at-risk youth, determining eligibility of sex trafficking victims for crime victim compensation, deterring demand, and more. Shared Hope has been actively involved in supporting this bill and provided expert testimony at the Congressional briefing in May 2011. The grant program outlined in this bill has also been included in S. 1301 discussed above.

U.S. Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA) introduced two bills tackling human trafficking. [H.R. 2730, Strengthening the Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act](#), will increase identification, documentation, and counseling for children at risk of exploitation. [H.R. 2801, Eliminate and Stop Abuse, Frequent Exploitation, and Trafficking on the Internet \(E-SAFETI\) Task Force](#) will create a public-private task force that includes leaders from the public sector and academia along with advocacy organizations and technology communities to investigate and combat the problem of cyber human trafficking.

Linda Smith, President and Founder of Shared Hope International, stated in strong support of H.R. 2730:

Congresswoman Bass has taken essential action through H.R. 2730, recognizing that many child victims of commercial sexual exploitation are already in the dependency system but are not consistently identified. The bill will fix a critical gap in our government's responses to our nation's most vulnerable children and further support the states in tackling the problem of domestic minor sex trafficking.

U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) introduced [H.R. 2759, the Business Transparency on Trafficking & Slavery Act](#), which requires companies to identify and disclose efforts to stem human trafficking, slavery, and child labor in their supply chains on its website in their annual reports to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

This issue is also gaining traction on the House floor as Congressman Ted Poe (R -TX) impressed the importance of acknowledging this crime in the U.S., rescuing and caring for victims, and prosecuting the perpetrators. In [his speech](#) on September 13 he recognized the organizations working to bring an end to human trafficking in the U.S. and around the world, including Shared Hope International.

He concluded his speech with the motivating line below. Thank you to Congressman Poe for standing up for those who have been victimized and exploited; we appreciate your leadership!

So I hope that we understand the necessity, the importance of taking care of our greatest resource, and our greatest resource is children in this country. No matter who they are or what's happened to them in their life, we need to take care of them, especially those young that, in the year 2011, become the slaves of someone else for money. Let's take care of this issue, Mr. Speaker, and stop this crime against humanity in this country and be the world leader.

Strengthened laws give greater tools for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges and bring greater justice for victims. Shared Hope is proud to work with legislator leaders who have made this a top priority in their state and in their nation.



Attention Federal employees: Shared Hope is part of the Combined Federal Campaign. Please note our CFC number: 60601, for your contribution.