□ 1315

STOP ADVERTISING VICTIMS OF EXPLOITATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 285) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a penalty for knowingly selling advertising that offers certain commercial sex acts.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 285

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation Act of 2015'' or the ''SAVE Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. ADVERTISING THAT OFFERS CERTAIN COMMERCIAL SEX ACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, is amended in subsection (a)(1), by inserting after ''obtains,'' the following: ''advertises,''.

(b) MENS REA REQUIREMENT.—Section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, is amended in subsection (a), by inserting after ''knowing, or'' the following: '', except where, in an offense under paragraph (2), the act constituting the violation of paragraph (1) is advertising,''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1591(b) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''or obtained'' and inserting ''obtained, or advertised''; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking ''or obtained'' and inserting ''obtained, or advertised''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Speaker recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 285, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation Act, H.R. 285, introduced by Mrs. WAGNER of Missouri, is an important yet modest bill. It uses one word, just one word, to clarify that, just as it is against the law to prostitute a child on the street, it is likewise against the law to prostitute a child through an advertisement.

By adding the word ''advertises'' to the existing Federal sex trafficking statute at 18 United States Code, section 1591, this bill makes clear that Congress intends to prohibit the knowing advertising of child sex trafficking to the same extent as the other conduct prohibited by law.

H.R. 285 is a technologically neutral bill and applies to all advertisements that sell children for sex over which there is Federal jurisdiction, regardless of whether they appear on the Internet or somewhere else. It is important to remember that these advertisements, as well as all speech promoting illegal activity, are specifically not protected speech under the First Amendment.

In order to bring a case against the trafficker under this legislation, the government must prove that the defendant knew that they were advertising and knew or recklessly disregarded the fact that the ad involved a minor or someone involved through force, fraud or coercion.

However, this legislation raises the bar even higher for defendants who, while not directly placing the ads, do knowingly benefit from the placement of advertising.

Specifically, the bill requires the government to show that these defendants knew that the advertisement involved a minor or a coerced adult. Reckless disregard is not sufficient.

H.R. 285 only clarifies that people who advertise sex trafficking could face criminal liability.

Under current law, there is the additional possibility of civil liability for defendants who violate the Federal sex trafficking statute. However, under section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, online publishers of third-party advertisements are generally immune from civil liability for such advertisements. H.R. 285 does nothing to disrupt or modify the immunity already provided by section 230.

Congress has criminalized advertising multiple times in recent years. Title 18 of the Federal criminal code currently prohibits advertising promoting counterfeit currency, section 491; obscene or treasonous material, section 552; and the unlawful sale of military medals, section 704, among other things.

It is wholly appropriate for Congress to prohibit the advertising of illegal goods or services. Having done so for illegal advertisements involving animal cruelty, prescription drugs, and counterfeit items, today we take the commonsense step of prohibiting advertising that offers sex with children and coerced adults.

While the Internet has indisputably done much good, U.S. law enforcement has identified online advertisements as the primary platform for buying and selling sex with minors.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), an active and committed member of the House Judiciary Committee and ranking member on the Commercial Subcommittee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 285, the SAVE Act.

Human trafficking is never okay. It is a vile crime that no one should be subjected to, but the SAVE Act goes too far.

This bill would impose a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 to 15 years for posting or facilitating the posting of advertisements online. We should be eliminating mandatory minimum sentences, not creating new ones.

This bill is not specific enough. It could potentially apply to communications providers and facilitators who are not actually engaged in sex trafficking.

For example, an employee at an online advertising network that has no role in the types of ads they receive could face 10 to 15 years in prison for simply going in to work every day and helping advance the business. Web hosts and ad networks oftentimes do not have advance warning of the ads that are being sent to them.

During our Judiciary Committee markup, I offered an amendment that would have removed mandatory minimums from the legislation, giving the judge hearing the case, of course, the discretion to impose a wise and just punishment.

I believe in the overall goal of the legislation, but I do not agree with its execution. Judges, working with the sentencing guidelines, should determine sentences, not legislators.

Mandatory minimums fail to reduce crime, they waste taxpayers' money, and often violate common sense.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this legislation.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), the author of this bill.

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership on this very, very important issue.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 285, the Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation, or SAVE, Act.

But Madam Speaker, I also rise today in support of all the good work done by my colleagues here in Congress on the issue of human trafficking.

Madam Speaker, as a former United States Ambassador, I was exposed firsthand to the horrors of human trafficking on an international level. I witnessed and reported on the devastating consequences of human trafficking, where innocent women and children were dragged into the dark abyss of sexual slavery.

But never, never in my wildest dreams did I ever think human trafficking was so rampant right here in the United States of America.

Madam Speaker, right now there are young women being forced into prostitution in virtually every district across this Nation. In fact, I was shocked to learn that my own hometown of St. Louis, Missouri, has been identified as one of the top 20 areas for sex trafficking in the United States.

Madam Speaker, this is a problem that is hiding in plain sight. Every year, thousands of young American lives are impacted by this despicable crime.

However, there is hope. I take hope from the work that is done by law enforcement professionals who are on the front lines every day protecting our Nation's children from those who would seek to exploit them.

I take hope from those who work in victims' services and their tireless efforts to help survivors recover, heal, and forge new lives out of the horrors of sexual enslavement.

Most importantly, I take hope from all the survivors of this hideous crime. This bracelet, Madam Speaker, was made by survivors at a safe house called Crisis Aid International in my own hometown of St. Louis, Missouri.

Their strength gives us strength, their resolve gives us inspiration, and their steadfast commitment to ending sex trafficking gives us the courage to fight.

I am grateful for the many colleagues that I have who have supported legislation and held events in their home districts to raise awareness and education of this crime. Our work has yet to begin.

However, Madam Speaker, there is much, much work to do still. Legislators, we have an obligation to come together and to do something because we can, because we should, and because we must.

Over the last 10 years, prostitution has slowly but persistently migrated to an online marketplace. Classified services like backpage.com and others are the vehicles for advertising the victims of sexual slavery in this world.

Pimps and traffickers blatantly advertise their victims' sexual services with provocative photographs and unsubtle messages, complete with per-hour pricing. The traffickers pay Web sites like Backpage and others to display their messages, and these Web sites, accordingly, reap enormous profits at the expense of victims of sex trafficking.

Many of these ads feature children and trafficking victims, and they are resulting in thousands of children every year being openly sold for sex on the Internet.

Madam Speaker, government intervention is necessary to end facilitation of sex trafficking by Web sites like backpage.com and others who commercially advertise this criminal activity.

Companies that base their business models off the profits made by selling sex with children should not be allowed to operate.

The SAVE Act seeks to criminalize this behavior, thereby dramatically reducing the victimization of vulnerable children and women forced into sexual slavery in the United States.

Madam Speaker, this legislation passed the House last year in an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 392–19.

I recognize that it is critically important that innocent actors are protected from the liability, while giving prosecutors the means to combat human trafficking.

To be clear, Madam Speaker, this legislation prohibits only those advertisements that the government can prove actually offer sex with a child or sex with an adult who is involved due to force, fraud, or coercion.

There is well-established precedent for Congress to criminalize the advertising of legal goods and services, as the chairman has outlined previously. Surely, advertisements offering sex with children should also be subject to the same restrictions.

Criminalizing the advertisement of trafficking victims will stem the flow of money, resulting in a reduction of both demand and supply.

The victims of sex trafficking are not nameless, faceless children. They are our daughters, our granddaughters, our nieces, and our neighbors. They are the vulnerable youth of our society, the ones who should be protected the most, Madam Speaker, not exploited for money and greed.

I urge my colleagues to support the SAVE Act because it will provide the tools necessary for law enforcement to combat the sexual exploitation and enslavement of women and children in the United States.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), who has served so ably on this committee, and we congratulate him for his ranking position on the Education Committee.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise in opposition to H.R. 285, the SAVE Act. While I support the underlying goal of ensuring that those who facilitate sex trafficking through advertising are prosecuted to the full extent of the law, I am opposed to the bill's mandatory minimum sentencing provisions.

Mandatory minimum sentences have been studied extensively and have been found to distort rational sentencing systems, discriminate against minorities, waste money, and often require a judge to impose sentences that violate common sense. To add insult to injury, studies have shown that mandatory minimum sentences fail to reduce crime.

Under this bill, the advertising of sex trafficking will result in a mandatory penalty of 10 or 15 years, depending on the circumstances of the crime. There is no doubt that many of these individuals prosecuted under this bill should receive long prison sentences, but in some cases a mandatory sentence of 10 or 15 years may not be justified.

This is particularly troublesome when you consider the possible scope of defendants who could be prosecuted under the bill. Notably, the prohibition on advertising does not only apply to the sex trafficker who places the ad, or the employee who accepted the ad, but also includes those who benefit financially from the ad.

□ 1330

That is all of the employees, including the receptionist or the computer guy, everybody on the payroll who might have seen the ads or read in the paper that the company publishes some illegal ads but decided to look the other way; they should be held responsible under the provisions of the bill. And many of them would certainly warrant a sentence of 15 years or even more, but not all of them.

Madam Speaker, mandatory minimum sentences didn't get into the criminal code at all once but one at a time, each one part of an otherwise good bill. If we expect to get rid of mandatory minimums, we have to first stop passing new ones like this.

Madam Speaker, if people ask why a judge in Florida had to sentence Marissa Alexander to 20 years for firing a warning shot at her abusive boyfriend, or why some drug dealer's girlfriend got 25 years when she had no meaningful role in his drug dealing, or why the United States has 5 percent of the world's population but 25 percent of the world's prisoners, they would not understand why anybody said they had to vote for a bill that further expands mandatory minimum sentences.

Fifteen years in prison, mandatory for everybody on the payroll that gets caught up in this bill—that is what is in this bill. There is no discretion afforded to the judge. The sentence would have to be imposed, whether it makes any sense or not.

Madam Speaker, if we expect to repeal mandatory minimum sentences, the first order of business is to stop passing new ones. This bill contains a new mandatory minimum that someday will require a judge to impose a sentence that violates common sense. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the distinguished chair of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Crime Subcommittee for his hard work on this issue, and I appreciate the time.

While it goes without saying that the growth of the Internet and smartphones have proven to be of great value in many aspects of our lives, these tools can also be used by criminals to facilitate the commercial sexual exploitation of children and other victims by providing an easy way for pimps or traffickers to market child sex trafficking victims to those who seek to do them harm. With just a click of a button, individuals can now use Web sites to advertise, schedule, and purchase sexual encounters with minors, just like they would use these services to hire a ride home.

The SAVE Act, introduced by Mrs. WAGNER from Missouri, makes a technical clarification to an existing Federal sex trafficking statute to make

clear that the law extends to traffickers who knowingly sell sex with minors and victims of force, fraud, or coercion through advertising, as well as to people or entities that knowingly benefit from the sale or distribution of such advertising.

While much of the growth of this terrible crime is on the Internet, this bill is technology neutral and applies to all advertising of children for sex, regardless of the medium. It is important to note that these advertisements, as with all ads and other speech promoting illegal activity, are not protected speech under the First Amendment.

H.R. 285 was the subject of robust committee process both last Congress and this, and the bill was reported out of the Judiciary Committee last week by voice vote. The legislation that is on the floor today strikes the right balance by protecting victims from commercial sexual exploitation, while also ensuring that constitutional rights are respected and innocent third parties are not wrongly prosecuted.

This legislation simply clarifies and modernizes Federal criminal law to keep pace with the evolving trend of exploiting the Internet for criminal gains. The bill passed the House floor last Congress with wide bipartisan support but was not enacted into law.

I commend my colleague from Missouri, Congresswoman WAGNER, for sponsoring this important legislation again.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I urge the United States Senate to take up this bill. Let's get it signed into law by the President of the United States. It would help save our children from the horrors that people understand but do not want to see. It is good legislation.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We started out this afternoon by saying that we join together in stopping the scourge of human trafficking and sex trafficking, and I still stand by that premise. I support the Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation Act. I do believe that adding advertising and having the provision in the law that includes mens rea is an important protection, that there must be an intent to sell and to advertise victims of exploitation.

This, of course, is part of a number of proposals that we are considering today—and we hope we are successful—to combat sex trafficking; but, as we have discussed with respect to these other bills, much more must be done to prevent sex trafficking as well as to aggressively investigate and prosecute these crimes. H.R. 285 amends the current Federal sex trafficking statute so that advertising would now be one of the prohibitive means of facilitating this type of exploitive criminal conduct.

We know, of course, that technology, however, sometimes is tricky. The bill correctly recognizes the fact that sex traffickers increasingly obtain customers for their illegal acts through the means of mass communication, either through various forms of print media or via the Internet. Maybe they throw in the cell phone or hard line as well, but they are out to get their victim. They are out to get that child. They are out to get that young woman or young man, boy or girl, and we must stop them in their tracks. In fact, sex traffickers use generalized marketplace Web pages to advertise, as well as sites and pages devoted to advertising the availability of commercial sex.

While the Internet has enriched our lives greatly, these sex traffickers are only interested in using it in the most vile manner; and they use the Internet to perpetrate heinous criminal schemes, such as the selling of minors for sex. Without question, sex traffickers who advertise their scheme should be penalized for their criminal acts.

While I realize that some have raised questions about how the advertising prohibitions under this bill would apply to online companies, I am concerned that we have a free use of that, if I might throw in a word, ''net neutrality.'' Because of this, we adopted an amendment during the Judiciary Committee's markup last Congress and now again, in a bipartisan effort, to address such concerns. That amendment is included in the text of H.R. 285.

We know, for example, however, that with the way the Internet is, some innocent person might wind up finding things on their site that they may not have had anything to do with. We hope the standard of mens rea will help those individuals have a defense.

So as it relates to this legislation, I raise concerns, as my colleagues have done, about the utilization, conduct, of mandatory minimums, primarily because of the vastness of the Internet, and our friends made the point that this advertising could wind up or some act could wind up on there without their knowledge.

We know the one-size-fits-all approach, which is part of the mandatory minimum approach, to criminal actions in the form of mandatory minimums has greatly contributed to our Nation's crisis of overincarceration, and our Judiciary Committee, rightly so, has looked at this over the years.

In the markup of this bill, the Judiciary Committee did not adopt an amendment that would have removed application of the statute's mandatory minimum penalties and instead allow a judge to apply an appropriate sentence under the circumstances of the case up to the statute's existing penalty, which I support enthusiastically, life in prison.

Given the complicated nature of Internet communications networks with respect to how advertisements are delivered, the role of the judge might help to carve through, to ferret out, the facts and determine the level of guilt. So authorizing life imprisonment is a good thing. It would allow sufficient latitude for the imposition of extremely lengthy sentences where appropriate.

I am hoping as we move forward with this legislation, which has a very important premise and point, that we will have the opportunity to discuss with our colleagues in the Senate to see how we can best make sure that this bill works to, in essence, target the bad guys and make sure that it does it fairly and directly, because sex trafficking, as I have always said on this floor, should be weeded out. Sex trafficking should not be.

I ask my colleagues again to consider the mandatory minimum. I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 285, the "Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation Act," is among a number of important proposals we are considering today to combat sex trafficking.

As we have discussed with respect to these other bills, much more must be done to prevent sex trafficking as well as to aggressively investigate and prosecute these crimes.

H.R. 285 amends the current federal sex trafficking statute so that advertising would now be one of the prohibited means of facilitating this type of exploitative criminal conduct.

The bill correctly recognizes the fact that sex traffickers increasingly obtain customers for their illegal acts through the means of mass communication, either through various forms of print media or via the Internet.

In fact, sex traffickers use generalized marketplace Web pages to advertise, as well as sites and pages devoted to advertising the availability of commercial sex.

While the Internet has enriched our lives greatly, these sex traffickers use the Internet to perpetrate heinous criminal schemes such as the selling of minors for sex.

Without question, sex traffickers who advertise their schemes should be penalized for their criminal acts, while I recognize that some have raised questions about how the advertising prohibitions under this bill would apply to online companies.

Because of this, we adopted an amendment during the Judiciary Committee's markup last Congress to help address such concerns. That amendment is included in the text of H.R. 285.

Nevertheless, I cannot support this bill in its current form because it would subject yet another category of conduct to mandatory minimum sentences.

Mandatory minimums lead to sentences that sometimes are not appropriate based on the facts of a particular case. A one-size-fits-all approach to criminal actions in the form of mandatory minimums has greatly contributed to our Nation's crisis of overincarceration.

In the markup of this bill, the Judiciary Committee declined to adopt an amendment that would have removed application of the statute's mandatory minimum penalties and instead allow a judge to apply an appropriate sentence—under the circumstances of the case—up to the statute's existing maximum penalty of life in prison.

Given the complicated nature of internet communications networks with respect to how advertisements are delivered, the role of the judge in evaluating each case is particularly important.

And, authorizing life imprisonment would allow sufficient latitude for the imposition of extremely lengthy sentences—when appropriate.

Because of this defect involving mandatory minimum sentences, I must oppose the bill that we consider today.

By voting "no," the House will allow the Judiciary Committee time to fix this serious flaw.

With this important consideration in mind, I must ask my colleagues to oppose the bill today so that we may consider a better bill dealing with this aspect of sex trafficking in the near future.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Madam Speaker, I am an avid supporter of the Internet; I have been one since the late 1970s. However, there is a dark side to the Internet. There are back pages out there and Web sites that have a business model to make money off of exploiting child sex slaves, advertising child sex slaves.

This bill gives law enforcement the tools they need to investigate and prosecute those who advertise the victims of sex trafficking. This bill advances a compelling government and humanitarian interest to protect our children from those who seek to buy and sell them like products. This bill makes it illegal to knowingly profit from the distribution of advertising that offers a commercial sex act in violation of section 1591 of the Federal criminal code, which deals with the sex trafficking offense.

The SAVE Act doesn't seek to restrict the free, legitimate exchange of information and ideas. I heard some of my colleagues on the other side—the gentleman from Georgia and others—express concern about innocent employees of Web sites or sites like Google that may accidentally index one of these sites or somebody who has an online forum on their Web site and somebody makes an off-topic post. That is why we added the word ''knowingly.'' I want the legislative history of this bill to show that ''knowingly'' is important. They have got to know that they are advertising for victims of human trafficking.

It was carefully crafted so that legitimate Internet companies and legitimate Web sites are protected, but it is absolutely critical that we go after those who are trafficking in persons and advertising and profiting off of it. They absolutely need to be held accountable.

Protection of America's First Amendment right to freedom of speech is fundamental, especially on the Internet, and that was one of the guiding principles of creating this. Less regulation of the Internet, low regulation of the Internet is important, but there are some things you have got to draw the line on. Profiting off of advertising or profiting at all from child sex trafficking is unacceptable, and this law fixes that to the best of our ability while still protecting folks' First Amendment rights.

I am proud to work with my colleague from Missouri, Representative WAGNER, in working to combat this terrible crime of human trafficking.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I would ask the gentleman from Wisconsin, the chairman, if he has any further speakers.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I have two additional requests for time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY).

Ms. MCSALLY. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman SENSENBRENNER, Congresswoman WAGNER, and all the other Members for their hard work on this important legislation put forward last night and today to combat human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a 21st century form of slavery, and it is devastating lives across the country. In Arizona's Second Congressional District, a lack of resources to identify victims, prevent instances of trafficking, and prosecute those who participate leads to many young girls and boys being victimized by these traffickers.

I spoke very recently with Jerry Peyton, the founder of an organization called Sold No More, dedicated to ending trafficking in Tucson, Arizona. Jerry experienced the devastation of trafficking firsthand in his own family. His daughter Lisa, who was a high school honors student, ran away from home after the death of her boyfriend, where she quickly was preyed upon by traffickers and forced into smuggling and prostitution. Jerry found his daughter living with five men who ran a drug ring and was able to rescue her, yet the police never apprehended the men who victimized Lisa. The only police record of this innocent reads: ''A juvenile returned to the custody of her parents.''

Jerry's family's experiences highlight the growing need for resources to train law enforcement to identify and respond to instances of trafficking. He told me that in Pima County there is not a single law enforcement officer in any agency dedicated full-time to the trafficking issue.

Before 2010, there had not been a single case of sex trafficking in Pima County, despite arrests for prostitution that treat victims like criminals. When they place online ads in back pages for clearly young victims, within 24 hours, there are 100 calls that come in looking to exploit these victims. This is wrong.

We can start raising awareness of trafficking by changing the perception of trafficking victims. It is estimated that only about 10 percent of those trafficked in our country have come across the border. The overwhelming majority are runaways and vulnerable children who are preyed upon.

□ 1345

These are our neighbors being trafficked in our communities, not some distant far-off place. Under the surface of our communities, sex trafficking is a prevalent and devastating reality. Widely-attended events like the Super Bowl coming up in Glendale, Arizona, or the annual gem show in Tucson act as a magnet for traffickers and, unfortunately, their victims.

It is critical that we pass this bill to prosecute all offenders who victimize and participate and advertise, including online, in the trafficking of children. We also must support efforts to raise awareness and educate those who work in law enforcement, health care, child protective services, and elsewhere to prevent all trafficking, give law enforcement the tools they need to be proactive, and care for the victims after they have been rescued.

I support this legislation and the 11 other bills put forward to combat human trafficking, and I urge support from my colleagues.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA).

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise and discuss this issue briefly. It just came to me last week when my 13-year-old daughter turned 14 and I looked at her and have seen her with her friends, just the scourge, the horrendous things that are done to these young ladies, whether it is here or internationally.

I was brought back to a visit I had last year to an organization called WAR, Women At Risk International, in my district, the Second District of Michigan, where they are trying to use civilian first responders to identify those signs of trafficking to make sure that those aren't those police reports saying ''minor returned to parent'' and that they are able to utilize the things that they see or suspect as a way of pulling those girls out of those situations.

It is heartfelt that I want to make sure that this body pursues this issue, and I commend all of our colleagues who have dealt with this as we are trying to create these circles of protection and hope around these women and children that are in this horrible situation.

Madam Speaker, I commend everybody for this legislation, and I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, in closing, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Madam Speaker, we have had three bills so far, and we are getting ready to offer two others that all speak to this very devastating impact on our children—human trafficking and sex trafficking. I think the Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation Act, H.R. 285, does focus on a particular niche that is heinous.

Our children are on the Internet, they are tech savvy, and they easily can become victims of an attractive site or attractive sounds and music, so I think this legislation, again, pinpoints a very serious issue.

The bill is an amendment of an existing legislation that includes a mens rea. There must be intent; but we do know, in the course of legislation, we have the opportunity to make sure that what we do does meet the test of getting those who are truly the perpetrators.

I would hope as this bill moves to the Senate, as we recognize the importance of this legislation, we, again, be reminded that one size does not often fit all and that judges can rightly have discretion to a sentence of life.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation so that we can have a comprehensive approach to legislative bills that have been on the floor today to attack head on, if you will, those who prey on our children, young men and women, people who find themselves lost with no place to go and become the serious victims of child pornography, sex trafficking, and human trafficking. As Members, we know that, many times, the entire life of that individual is changed forever.

I yield back the balance of my time and ask for support of the underlying bill.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, we have spent about an hour and a half today talking about how bad this problem is. The two previous bills were passed unanimously by voice vote.

There seem to be two arguments against the current bill. One is that the net might be too broad. That has been responded emphatically by putting a ''knowingly'' standard in so that somebody who is innocent will not be caught up if an advertisement for sex trafficking appears without their knowledge.

The second is the philosophical debate on mandatory minimum sentences. I think there are some crimes where there ought to be a mandatory minimum sentence. I know many of my colleagues sincerely disagree with that, but believe me, advertising kids—minor kids—for sex should be something that puts you in jail for some time.

I am glad this bill allows for life sentences in case of egregious offenses, but I think that even in ones that might be less than egregious, spending some time in jail will show this country and maybe others who may be tempted to get involved in this horrific business that if you are caught, you are going to spend some time.

Madam Speaker, I urge Members to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 285.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 181) to provide justice for the victims of trafficking, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 181

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. VICTIM-CENTERED SEX TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 203 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 14044b) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (j);

(2) by striking subsections (a) through (f), and inserting the following:

''(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General may make grants to eligible entities to develop, improve, or expand comprehensive domestic child human trafficking deterrence programs that assist law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judicial officials, and qualified victims' services organizations in collaborating to rescue and restore the lives of victims, while investigating and prosecuting offenses involving child human trafficking.

''(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Grants awarded under subsection (a) may be used for—

''(1) the establishment or enhancement of specialized training programs for law enforcement officers, first responders, health care officials, child welfare officials, juvenile justice personnel, prosecutors, and judicial personnel to—

''(A) identify victims and acts of child human trafficking;

''(B) address the unique needs of victims of child human trafficking;

''(C) facilitate the rescue of victims of child human trafficking;

''(D) investigate and prosecute acts of child human trafficking, including the soliciting, patronizing, or purchasing of commercial sex acts from children, as well as training to build cases against complex criminal networks involved in child human trafficking; and

''(E) implement and provide education on safe harbor laws enacted by States, aimed at preventing the criminalization and prosecution of victims of child human trafficking for prostitution offenses;

''(2) the establishment or enhancement of dedicated anti-child human trafficking law enforcement units and task forces to investigate child human trafficking offenses and to rescue victims, including—

''(A) funding salaries, in whole or in part, for law enforcement officers, including patrol officers, detectives, and investigators, except that the percentage of the salary of the law enforcement officer paid for by funds from a grant awarded under this section shall not be more than the percentage of the officer's time on duty that is dedicated to working on cases involving child human trafficking;

''(B) investigation expenses for cases involving child human trafficking, including—

''(i) wire taps;

''(ii) consultants with expertise specific to cases involving child human trafficking;

''(iii) travel; and

''(iv) other technical assistance expenditures;

''(C) dedicated anti-child human trafficking prosecution units, including the funding of salaries for State and local prosecutors, including assisting in paying trial expenses for prosecution of child human trafficking offenses, except that the percentage of the total salary of a State or local prosecutor that is paid using an award under this section shall be not more than the percentage of the total number of hours worked by the prosecutor that is spent working on cases involving child human trafficking; and

''(D) the establishment of child human trafficking victim witness safety, assistance, and relocation programs that encourage cooperation with law enforcement investigations of crimes of child human trafficking by leveraging existing resources and delivering child human trafficking victims' services through coordination with—

''(i) child advocacy centers;

''(ii) social service agencies;

''(iii) State governmental health service agencies;

''(iv) housing agencies;

''(v) legal services agencies; and

''(vi) non-governmental organizations and shelter service providers with substantial experience in delivering services to victims of child human trafficking;

''(3) the establishment or enhancement of problem solving court programs for child human trafficking victims that include—

''(A) continuing judicial supervision of victims of child human trafficking who have been identified by a law enforcement or judicial officer as a potential victim of child human trafficking, regardless of whether the victim has been charged with a crime related to human trafficking;

''(B) the development of specialized and individualized treatment programs for identified victims of child human trafficking, including—

''(i) State-administered outpatient treatment;

''(ii) life skills training;

''(iii) housing placement;

''(iv) vocational training;

''(v) education;

''(vi) family support services; and

''(vii) job placement; and

''(C) collaborative efforts with child advocacy centers, child welfare agencies, shelters, and non-governmental organizations to provide services to victims and encourage cooperation with law enforcement; and

''(4) the establishment or enhancement of victims' services programs for victims of child human trafficking, which offer services including—

''(A) residential care, including temporary or long-term placement, as appropriate;

''(B) 24-hour emergency social services response systems; and

''(C) counseling and case management services.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity shall submit an application to the Attorney General for a grant under this section in such form and manner as the Attorney General may require.

''(2) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—An application submitted under this subsection shall—

''(A) disclose—