

fueled an exploding multibillion-dollar market for child pornography.

Tragically, this market exploits the graphic images that result from the horrific sexual assault of more children. The pandemic only exacerbated the problem, as our world shifts more online.

But these are not just heinous online images, they are crime scene photos created by a thriving industry that uses children as sexual commodities.

Almost 15 years ago, I introduced the Providing Resources, Officers, and Technology to Eradicate Cyber Threats to Our Children Act of 2007. With the support of Mr. JORDAN at a House Judiciary hearing on that bill, we heard from a very brave young woman, Alicia Kozakiewicz. She was abducted by an internet predator at just 13, held captive in his dungeon basement, and sexually tortured for 4 days.

The FBI found Alicia because the Virginia Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, or ICAC, had the technology to lift the digital fingerprints of this perpetrator's crimes.

They were able to discover the location where he held her captive, chained to the floor, connected to a collar around her neck. Internet crimes officers tracked the IP address back to his door, and literally rescued her from death.

I remember her testimony like it was yesterday. It moved many of the members of that committee, including myself, to tears.

In the 20 years since her abduction and torture, Alicia still shares her personal nightmare to help protect other young people.

Over that next year, we learned a lot about these offenders: who they are, how they operate, and most important, where they are. We saw detailed law enforcement maps that showed the locations of hundreds of thousands of sexual predators, 5 percent of whom had actual child victims waiting to be rescued.

It was a truly harrowing environment they described.

And Congress acted.

With then-Senator Joe Biden as my Senate partner, we passed legislation establishing the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program, or ICAC, a specialized group of law enforcement officials dedicated to the protection of children.

The task forces grew from 42 to 61, and arrests and child rescues doubled. They doubled. Literally thousands more predators were apprehended and children rescued. An untold number of sexual assaults were prevented.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, the PROTECT Our Children Act, the bipartisan legislation that I introduced this week with Senator CORNYN, and Representatives CHABOT,

KUSTER, and RESCHENTHALER reauthorizes the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program, the national network of coordinated law enforcement task forces investigating and prosecuting those who sexually exploit our most vulnerable constituents—our children.

According to estimates, half of the arrests made by ICAC teams led us to the door of a hands-on offender, and thus, a child waiting to be rescued.

We must make the protection of these children the focus of all of our efforts. Please think about these precious children being victimized. If you are a parent, God forbid, it was your own child.

Let's give these ICAC teams the resources they need to rescue as many as possible.

An impressive and deeply troubling investigation by The New York Times described the forces arrayed against these ICAC teams as an "insatiable criminal underworld," and one in which tech companies are not always able or totally willing to confront.

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But if we empower these ICACs with today's reauthorization, thousands more innocent children will be protected from these unspeakable crimes. We owe them that.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their indulgence.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support S. 4834, PROTECT Our Children Act of 2022.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 4834, the "PROTECT Our Children Act of 2022," a critical piece of bipartisan legislation that would reauthorize the Internet Crimes Against Children task force program, or "ICAC," which has worked tirelessly for 14 years to protect our children from online predators.

It is no exaggeration to say the internet is today one of the most dangerous places for our nation's children, many of whom spend hours each day online. Predators use social media and other online resources to groom and entice children to commit sexual acts. The internet makes it easy for sex and labor traffickers to gain clandestine access to children and teens, recruit them into their organizations, and exploit them.

The internet is also the primary vehicle for distributing child sex abuse material and committing criminal acts of sextortion against minors. It also provides an open forum for cyberbullying and online harassment, which can lead victims of such conduct to withdraw, become depressed, and even commit suicide.

To combat these monstrous crimes and protect our youth from exploitation, ICAC task forces work with federal, state, and local law enforcement to develop an effective, holistic response to cybercrimes against children. Their programs include forensic and investigative components, training and technical assistance, victim services, and community education.

The ICAC network is made up of 61 separate task forces—three of which are in my home state of Texas. These ICAC task forces were created and authorized by the original PROTECT Our Children Act of 2008, which

expired this past September, at the end of the fiscal year.

Yet online threats to children, and the need for ICAC's task forces, are only growing. Between 2008 and 2021, the number of ICAC arrests rose from 2,500 to more than 10,000 each year. ICAC's work resulted in more than 137,000 investigations and 90,300 forensic exams in 2021 alone.

Earlier this year, the Southern Texas ICAC task force received significant funding—its first—authorized by the PROTECT Our Children Act, allowing it to provide substantial investigative, prosecutorial, and victim-centered services, and to utilize tips from the national ICAC database, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to identify and rescue child victims.

But the work of the task force, and that of the other ICAC task forces nationwide, will not be able to continue unless we fund this critical law enforcement initiative. It is, therefore, essential that we reauthorize the ICAC program by passing the bipartisan PROTECT Our Children Act of 2022.

The Act would extend funding for ICAC task forces and programs through 2024. Without this crucial legislation, our children will remain vulnerable to those who seek to exploit and hurt them in the most horrific of ways, with the ease and anonymity the internet provides.

I commend my colleague, Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, for her work on the PROTECT Our Children Act, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 4834.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PATENTS FOR HUMANITY ACT OF 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 5796) to amend title 35, United States Code, to establish a competition to award certificates that can be redeemed to accelerate certain matters at the Patent and Trademark Office, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Patents for Humanity Act of 2022".

SEC. 2. AWARD OF CERTIFICATES TO ACCELERATE CERTAIN MATTERS AT THE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE.

(a) AWARD.—Chapter 2 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§28. Award of certificates to accelerate certain matters at the Patent and Trademark Office

“(a) *DEFINITION.*—In this section, the term ‘eligible entity’ means an entity that—

“(1) submits an application under subsection (d) for a patent that addresses a humanitarian issue; and

“(2) meets the requirements specified by the Director.

“(b) *ESTABLISHMENT.*—There is established a competition, to be held not less frequently than biennially, to award eligible entities certificates that can be redeemed to accelerate one of the following matters:

“(1) An *ex parte* reexamination proceeding, including 1 appeal to the Patent Trial and Appeal Board from that proceeding.

“(2) An application for a patent, including 1 appeal to the Patent Trial and Appeal Board from that application.

“(3) An appeal to the Patent Trial and Appeal Board of a claim twice rejected in a patent application or reissue application or finally rejected in an *ex parte* reexamination, without accelerating the underlying matter that generated the appeal.

“(4) A matter identified by the Director.

“(c) *ADMINISTRATION.*—The Director shall administer the competition established under subsection (b).

“(d) *APPLICATION.*—An entity seeking an award under subsection (b) shall submit to the Director an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Director may require.

“(e) *PROMOTION OF COMPETITION.*—The Director shall promote the competition established under subsection (b) through the satellite offices established pursuant to section 1.

“(f) *TREATMENT AS SUCCESSOR.*—The competition established under subsection (b) shall be treated as a successor to the Patents for Humanity Program (established in the notice entitled ‘Humanitarian Awards Pilot Program’, published at 77 Fed. Reg. 6544 (February 8, 2012)).”.

“(b) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing in this section, or the amendments made by this section, may be construed as affecting any action taken by the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office before the date of enactment of this Act with respect to the administration of the Patents for Humanity Program established in the notice entitled ‘Humanitarian Awards Pilot Program’, published at 77 Fed. Reg. 6544 (February 8, 2012).

“(c) *TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.*—The table of sections for chapter 2 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“28. Award of certificates to accelerate certain matters at the Patent and Trademark Office.”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the Senate amendment to H.R. 5796.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Senate amendment to H.R. 5796 which codifies a competition at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office called Patents for Humanity. The Patents for Humanity program highlights the ways that innovation and intellectual property help solve global humanitarian challenges. I applaud Representatives JEFFRIES and SPARTZ for spearheading this bill in order to ensure that special recognition permanently extends to inventors who turn their genius toward allaying or helping the world’s most needy and vulnerable.

The Senate amendment does away with the need for extra rulemaking before the competition can continue its operation, and, as such, is a welcome addition to help streamline the bill.

The operative provisions of the bill will make permanent the Patents for Humanity awards program which encourages the development and use of inventions that address humanitarian needs in the fields of medicine, nutrition, sanitation, household energy, and living standards for impoverished people. Winning inventors are recognized in a public awards ceremony and receive a certificate that can be used to accelerate certain examination proceedings at the USPTO.

Since 2012, the USPTO has recognized numerous award recipients across a wide range of technologies. The recipients have invented groundbreaking technologies that greatly improve the standard of living for so many people in need in the United States and around the world.

The bill also builds on the work of Representative MCBATH who successfully led a bipartisan effort to pass legislation in the last Congress strengthening the program. That law allowed the awards certificate to be transferrable if the award recipient would prefer to seek its free-market value rather than accelerate a different patent application.

Today, we are going a step further by ensuring that this program is a permanent feature of our innovation ecosystem.

In Congress, we strive to make sure that our intellectual property laws incentivize innovation to the greatest extent possible, but this category of humanitarian inventions will always deserve special recognition. H.R. 5796, as amended in the Senate, will make sure that it will.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office established the Patents for Humanity program as a pilot program in 2012 to recognize noteworthy inventions that address humanitarian problems.

The program has honored inventions relating to water purification, infectious diseases, crop yields, and infant mortality, among others. Winners are

awarded certificates that grant acceleration of certain matters before the USPTO, such as examination of a future patent application.

The Patents for Humanity program provides an incentive to encourage innovation in areas important to addressing humanitarian needs of today and the future. It does this without costing taxpayers a penny and without the need to raise user fees at the PTO. This is a very important distinction.

This bill would also allow this successful pilot program to continue as a congressionally approved program. The Senate version of this bill on the floor today is almost identical to the version the House passed this past spring with just a few minor changes.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5796 is a straightforward but important bill that will encourage additional innovations that address humanitarian needs both in the U.S. and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Senate amendment to H.R. 5796, which codifies a competition at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office called “Patents for Humanity.” The Patents for Humanity program highlights the ways that innovation and intellectual property help solve global humanitarian challenges.

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Since 2012, the USPTO has recognized numerous award recipients across a wide range of technologies. The recipients have invented groundbreaking technologies that greatly improve the standard of living for so many people in need in the United States and around the world.

This bill also builds on the work of Representative MCBATH, who successfully led a bipartisan effort to pass legislation in the last Congress strengthening the program. That law allowed the awards certificate to be transferable if the award recipient would prefer to seek its free market value rather than accelerate a different patent application.

Today, we are going a step further by ensuring that this program is a permanent feature of our innovation ecosystem.

In Congress, we strive to make sure that our intellectual property laws incentivize innovation to the greatest extent possible, but this

category of humanitarian inventions will always deserve special recognition. H.R. 5796, as amended in the Senate, makes sure that it will, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 5796.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION ACT OF 2022

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 4052) to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 4052

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 “Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM FOR EARLY DETECTION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT REGARDING DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING NEWBORNS, INFANTS, AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

Section 399M of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g-1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e), by inserting “(3)” before “The term ‘medical evaluation’”; and

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$17,818,000 for fiscal year 2018, \$18,173,800 for fiscal year 2019, \$18,628,145 for fiscal year 2020, \$19,056,592 for fiscal year 2021, and \$19,522,758 for fiscal year 2022” and inserting “\$17,818,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2027”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$10,800,000 for fiscal year 2018, \$11,026,800 for fiscal year 2019, \$11,302,470 for fiscal year 2020, \$11,562,427 for fiscal year 2021, and \$11,851,488 for fiscal year 2022” and inserting “\$10,760,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2027”.

SEC. 3. GAO STUDY ON STATE EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study reviewing State early hearing detection and intervention (in this section referred to as “EHDI”) programs. Such study shall—

(1) analyze how information collected through such programs informs what is known about EHDI activities to ensure that newborns, infants, and young children have access to timely hearing screenings and early interventions, including information on any disparities in such access;

(2) analyze what is known about how parents use State EHDI websites to seek health

and programmatic guidance related to their child’s hearing loss diagnosis; and

(3) identify efforts and any promising practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, and State EHDI programs—

(A) to address disparities in outreach for, or access to, timely hearing screenings and early interventions; and

(B) to ensure that EHDI follow-up services are communicated and made available to medically underserved populations, including racial and ethnic minorities.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall—

(1) complete the study under subsection (a) and submit a report on the results of the study to—

(A) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(2) make such report publicly available.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 4052.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of S. 4052, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act. Last year, we passed the House version of this bill, H.R. 5561, which was sponsored by Health Subcommittee Ranking Member GUTHRIE and Representative MATSUI. I thank both of them for their leadership on this issue.

Over the last 20 years, Mr. Speaker, we have been very successful in addressing one of the most common birth defects affecting America’s children: congenital hearing loss. Children with this condition are born with hearing loss and are at risk for delays in speech, language, social, and emotional development.

Fortunately, early detection and intervention is highly effective in preventing these adverse effects.

Since 2000, Congress has passed and subsequently reauthorized Early Hearing Detection and Intervention programs, also known as EHDI programs. These programs support State and territory programs and systems of care to identify and support children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Thanks to these programs, early hearing loss screening, diagnosis, and treatment services have greatly increased over the last two decades.

Consider that before 1993, only 1 in 10 newborns were screened for hearing

loss. Today, according to data from the Centers for Disease and Prevention, 97 percent of all infants are screened within the first month of their lives. Furthermore, 60 percent of infants receive audiological evaluations and diagnosis by 3 months of age, and 72 percent of infants were enrolled in early intervention services before they are 6 months old. These are remarkable achievements that help ensure all children with hearing loss have the same opportunities as children who can hear.

Today, we are considering a bill that will help us build on these achievements. S. 4052, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act, would extend critical funding for EHDI programs for 5 years through fiscal year 2027. This legislation will ensure that these services continue to be available for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 4052, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act, the companion legislation to H.R. 5561 sponsored by Energy and Commerce Committee members, Representatives Guthrie and Matsui.

S. 4052 is very similar to the legislation that passed the House 410-17, and I hope in the upcoming vote it will receive even more “yes” votes.

Hearing loss in children continues to be all too prevalent in the United States. According to recent CDC data, almost 15 percent of children aged 6 to 19 experience either low- or high-frequency hearing loss in one or both ears.

The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention program, administered through the CDC and the Health Resources and Services Agency, has helped providers to quickly identify babies and young children who are born deaf or hard of hearing, which has led to improved health outcomes and brought hope to so many families.

S. 4052 reauthorizes Federal support for these important statewide programs that help early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children through 2027.

This bill will help redouble our efforts to truly open the world of communication to children who experiencing hearing loss.

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, again, I urge all Members to vote for this on a bipartisan basis and mention that when it passes today that it will go to the President’s desk.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by