

Commission on International Religious Freedom is the U.S. government's strongest and most respected voice for victims of religious persecution worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, USCIRF's mission is to monitor religious freedom violations globally and make policy recommendation to the U.S. government—that's a big mission, and it's always commanded bipartisan support. S. 3764 and its House companion, H.R. 7025, which has identical language and was introduced by myself and my good friend Rep. ESHOO, has together an equal number of Republican and Democrat co-sponsors. I believe Speaker JOHNSON's most recent appointments to the Commission, our former colleague Vicky Hartzler and Maureen Ferguson, will help keep it on course. Congress will continue to do its part.

USCIRF is important to millions of our constituents of all faiths. I urge my colleagues to support S. 3764 and reauthorize the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3764.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. 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.

GAO DATABASE MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2023

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 679) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to require Federal agencies to submit to the Comptroller General of the United States a report on rules that are revoked, suspended, replaced, amended, or otherwise made ineffective.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 679

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 "GAO Database Modernization Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. RULES NO LONGER IN EFFECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 801(a)(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(D) For any rule submitted under subparagraph (A), if the Federal agency promulgating the rule, in whole or in part, revokes, suspends, replaces, amends, or otherwise makes the rule ineffective, or the rule is made ineffective for any other reason, the Federal agency shall submit to the Comptroller General a report containing—

"(i) the title of the rule;

"(ii) the Federal Register citation for the rule, if any;

"(iii) the date on which rule was submitted to the Comptroller General; and

"(iv) a description of the provisions of the rule that are being revoked, suspended, replaced, amended, or otherwise made ineffective."

(b) SUNSET.—Effective on the date that is 6 years after the date of enactment of this Act, section 801(a)(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraph (D), as added by subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. IVEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 679.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 679, the GAO Database Modernization Act. This is an important piece of legislation that would help Congress, the Government Accountability Office, and the public keep track of the rule-making activities of the administrative state.

Under the Congressional Review Act, administrative agencies are required to notify Congress and the GAO when that agency enacts a new rule. This notification process allows Congress to review and, if necessary, consider a resolution to reject the new rule within a certain period of time.

The notification process also allows the GAO to maintain a publicly available database of all rules. This publicly available database allows the American people to access information about the rules and regulations that govern their lives.

One downside, however, is that, under current law, agencies, although required to publish new rules, are not required to notify Congress or the GAO if they amend or eliminate a rule. This can lead to significant confusion. If the GAO is not notified of a change to or revocation of a rule, then it is unable to maintain an up-to-date database for the American people.

Further, because agencies are not required to notify Congress when a rule is modified or eliminated, many activities undertaken by the administrative state occur without any oversight.

As a result, the American people may view out-of-date information when searching for details about regulations, and Congress does not have easy access to all the information required to effectively conduct oversight of the administrative state.

S. 679 seeks to remedy this problem. The GAO Database Modernization Act will require administrative agencies to notify the GAO whenever they amend, suspend, or eliminate any rule.

This bill would allow the GAO to maintain a comprehensive database,

tracking all administrative rule-making developments, not just newly enacted rules. This commonsense, narrowly tailored, and bipartisan proposal will ensure that the American people have access to complete and correct information about the rules that govern their lives.

It will also allow Congress to better monitor the regulatory developments of the administrative state and ensure that Members of Congress are appropriately informed of the regulatory state of play.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the GAO Database Modernization Act would amend the Congressional Review Act to require Federal agencies to report to the GAO certain information about agency rules that are made ineffective due to an agency action or other reason.

The Congressional Review Act, or CRA, requires an agency to submit a report to both Houses of Congress and to GAO whenever it promulgates a rule. This reporting requirement enables Congress to be kept regularly informed of rulemaking activity by all administrative agencies.

GAO has created a publicly accessible database which tracks all rules submitted by the agencies. However, agencies do not currently report updates, suspensions, or alterations of rules to GAO unless any modifications are part of a newly promulgated regulation.

To increase transparency, this legislation amends the CRA to require agencies to submit a report to GAO on rules that are revoked, suspended, amended, or otherwise made ineffective.

While I do not oppose this legislation, I do note that I have concerns with the underlying Congressional Review Act, and I hope that we will have an opportunity to examine whether the law is operating as intended.

The CRA, which provides a fast-track process whereby Congress can overturn an agency regulation, could be misused to undermine lifesaving regulations to protect public health and safety.

Regulations take significant time, resources, public input, and expertise to craft, but the CRA allows narrow, partisan majorities in Congress to do away with them without any of the deliberative processes that went into making them.

Since the CRA also prohibits an agency from issuing another rule "in substantially the same form" without congressional authorization, it allows Congress to tie an agency's hands well into the future.

I hope this legislation is a modest improvement to oversight and transparency, but I hope that this is just the beginning of a larger conversation about the CRA and its impact on the regulatory process.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, although I hope that we can engage in a broader conversation about the Congressional Review Act, I appreciate that this bill provides additional transparency into the regulatory process.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues 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 Oregon (Mr. BENTZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 679.

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.

IMPACTT HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACT

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 670) to improve services for trafficking victims by establishing, in Homeland Security Investigations, the Investigators Maintain Purposeful Awareness to Combat Trafficking Trauma Program and the Victim Assistance Program.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 670

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 “IMPACTT Human Trafficking Act”.

SEC. 2. INVESTIGATORS MAINTAIN PURPOSEFUL AWARENESS TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING TRAUMA PROGRAM.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established, in Homeland Security Investigations of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Investigators Maintain Purposeful Awareness to Combat Trafficking Trauma Program (referred to in this Act as the “IMPACTT Program”).

(b) **FUNCTIONS.**—The IMPACTT Program shall—

(1) provide outreach and training to Homeland Security Investigations employees who have been exposed to various forms of trauma in working with victims of human trafficking, including—

(A) self-awareness training for the relevant employees on recognizing the signs of burnout, compassion fatigue, critical incident stress, traumatic stress, posttraumatic stress, secondary traumatic stress, and vicarious trauma;

(B) training material that—

(i) provides mechanisms for self-care and resilience and notification of resources that are available through U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, such as the Employee Assistance Program, the Peer Support Program, the Chaplain Program, and other rel-

evant accredited programs that are available; and

(ii) provides examples of potential resources that are available outside of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which may include, faith-based and community-based resources; and

(C) provide additional training to first line supervisors of relevant employees on recognizing the signs referred to in subparagraph (A) and the appropriate responses to employees exhibiting such signs;

(2) include training modules that are carried out by—

(A) licensed and accredited clinicians who—

(i) have been trained on the exposure of various forms of trauma and other stressors experienced in working with victims; and

(ii) may have experience working with faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, counseling programs, or other social service programs; and

(B) additional subject matter experts who are available; and

(3) be overseen and coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security Center for Countering Human Trafficking to ensure that—

(A) appropriate program materials are distributed;

(B) training is offered to all relevant employees; and

(C) any needed travel and equipment is provided.

SEC. 3. HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subtitle D of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 251 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 447. HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) **FORENSIC INTERVIEW SPECIALIST.**—The term ‘forensic interview specialist’ is an interview professional who has specialized experience and training in conducting trauma-informed forensic interviews with victims of crime.

“(2) **VICTIM.**—The term ‘victim’ has the meaning given such term in section 503(e)(2) of the Victims’ Rights and Restitution Act of 1990 (34 U.S.C. 2041(e)(2)).

“(3) **VICTIM ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST.**—The term ‘victim assistance specialist’ is a victim assistance professional who—

“(A) has experience working with victims of crime in a service capacity;

“(B) has been trained on the exposure of various forms of trauma and other stressors experienced in working with victims; and

“(C) may have experience working with local government and community-based organizations, including victim advocacy centers, child advocacy centers, child welfare agencies, faith-based organizations, and other social service programs.

“(b) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established, in Homeland Security Investigations of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Victim Assistance Program.

“(c) **FUNCTIONS.**—The Victim Assistance Program shall—

“(1) provide oversight, guidance, training, travel, equipment, and coordination to Homeland Security Investigations victim assistance personnel throughout the United States;

“(2) recruit not fewer than—

“(A) 1 forensic interview specialist and 1 victim assistance specialist for each Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent in Charge office;

“(B) 1 victim assistance specialist for—

“(i) every Homeland Security Investigations office participating in a human trafficking task force; and

“(ii) every Homeland Security Investigations office participating in a child sexual exploitation task force;

“(3) support Homeland Security Investigations regional attaché offices, to the extent necessary;

“(4) provide training regarding victims’ rights, victim-related policies, roles of forensic interviewers and victim assistance specialists, and an approach that is—

“(A) victim-centered;

“(B) trauma-informed; and

“(C) linguistically appropriate, to the extent feasible; and

“(5) purchase emergency items that are needed to assist identified victims in Homeland Security Investigations criminal investigations, including food, clothing, hygiene products, transportation, and temporary shelter that is not otherwise provided by a nongovernmental organization.”.

(b) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—The Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296) is amended—

(1) in section 1(b) (6 U.S.C. 101 note)—

(A) by striking the item relating to section 442 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 442. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.”;

and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 446 the following:

“Sec. 447. Homeland Security Investigations Victim Assistance Program.”;

(2) in section 442—

(A) by amending the section heading to read as follows: “**U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT**”;

(B) by striking “bureau” each place such term appears (except in subsection (a)(1)) and inserting “agency”;

(C) by striking “the Bureau of Border Security” each place such term appears and inserting “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement”;

(D) in subsection (a)—

(i) in the subsection heading, by striking “OF BUREAU”;

(ii) in paragraph (3)(C), by striking “affecting the Bureau of” and inserting “affecting U.S.”; and

(iii) in paragraph (4), by striking “the Bureau.” and inserting “the agency.”; and

(E) in subsection (b)(2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “Bureau of Border Security” and inserting “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “the Bureau of” before “Citizenship and Immigration Services” and inserting “U.S.”; and

(3) in section 443(2), by striking “such bureau” and inserting “such agency”.

SEC. 4. ANNUAL REPORT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit a report to Congress that identifies, with respect to the reporting period—

(1) the number of trainings that were provided through the IMPACTT Program and the number of personnel who received such training; and

(2) the number of human trafficking victims who were assisted by the Homeland Security Investigations Victim Assistance Program.

SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of carrying out this Act.