

HR 296

Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Crime and Law Enforcement

Introduced: Jan 13, 2015

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations. (Feb 2, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/296>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Poe, Ted [R-TX-2]

Party: Republican • **State:** TX • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Maloney, Carolyn B. [D-NY-12]	D · NY		Jan 13, 2015
Rep. Jenkins, Lynn [R-KS-2]	R · KS		Jan 22, 2015
Rep. Cramer, Kevin [R-ND-At Large]	R · ND		Mar 17, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	House	Referred to	Feb 2, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Crime and Law Enforcement

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 S 178	Identical bill	May 29, 2015: Became Public Law No: 114-22.
114 HR 1201	Related bill	Mar 31, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.
114 S 140	Related bill	Jan 8, 2015: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (Sponsor introductory remarks on measure: CR S105-106; text of measure as introduced: CR S106-107)

Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015

This bill amends the federal criminal code, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005, the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990, and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to enhance protections and increase restitution for victims of human trafficking.

The bill imposes an additional penalty of \$5,000 on any non-indigent person or entity convicted of a crime involving: (1) peonage, slavery, and trafficking in persons; (2) sexual abuse; (3) sexual exploitation and other abuse of children; (4) transportation for illegal sexual activity; or (5) human smuggling in violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Establishes the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund into which revenues from such penalty shall be deposited and used in FY2016-FY2020 to award grants or enhance victims' programming. Specified funding is allotted to provide services for victims of child pornography.

The Department of Health and Human Services is directed to issue a determination, based on credible evidence, that a U.S. citizen or permanent resident is a victim of a severe form of trafficking.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) is authorized to award block grants to develop, improve, or expand domestic child human trafficking deterrence programs that assist law enforcement and other entities in rescuing and restoring the lives of trafficking victims, while investigating and prosecuting offenses involving child human trafficking.

The bill expands the definition of "child abuse" under the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 to include human trafficking and the production of child pornography and expands criminal sanctions to include persons who patronize or solicit children for commercial sex acts (buyers).

The bill increases compensation and restitution under the federal criminal code for victims of human trafficking and classifies producers of child pornography as engaged in illicit sexual conduct involving human trafficking.

Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015

Under this Act, DOJ is required to ensure that each DOJ anti-human trafficking program includes technical training on investigating and prosecuting persons who obtain, patronize, or solicit commercial sex acts involving a person subject to severe forms of trafficking in persons. The Act also requires the Bureau of Justice Statistics of DOJ to prepare and submit annual reports on state enforcement of human trafficking prohibitions.

The bill directs DOJ to: (1) ensure that all task forces and working groups within the Innocence Lost National Initiative engage in activities, programs, or operations to increase the investigative capabilities of law enforcement personnel in investigating and prosecuting persons who patronize or solicit children for sex; and (2) audit grants awarded under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005.

Finally, the bill imposes restrictions and reporting requirements on DOJ conferences that use more than \$20,000 in DOJ funds and prohibits grant recipients under this Act from lobbying any representative of DOJ or a state, local, or tribal government regarding the award of grant funding.

Actions Timeline

- **Feb 2, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.
- **Jan 27, 2015:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR E123-124)
- **Jan 13, 2015:** Introduced in House
- **Jan 13, 2015:** Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.