



May 15, 2015

Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: S. 178 "Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act"

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of our nation's elected and appointed state and local government officials, we write to express strong support of S. 178, the "Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act", and urge the House of Representatives to quickly vote on and pass this very important legislation. S. 178 contains nearly all of the anti-trafficking bills passed by the House in January and is the first comprehensive anti-trafficking bill that addresses all aspects of human trafficking, including law enforcement training, to better identify and apprehend traffickers as well as all aspects of victims' services and restitution.

While we appreciate the efforts by the House to address human trafficking through a package of bills, S. 178 addresses the needs of states and localities by melding together federal, state and local priorities with a common goal of eradicating the inhumane practice of human trafficking in a single piece of legislation. The Domestic Trafficking Victims Fund creates an important funding stream for states and human trafficking victims. This funding mechanism will not adversely impact existing federal criminal justice funding streams to states, but rather supplement them.

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Throughout the legislative process, we have appreciated the opportunity to collaborate on important provisions contained within this legislation. Our organizations recognize that human trafficking has a pervasive and negative state and local impact across the United States. In response to this growing problem, during the 2011, 2012 and 2013 legislative sessions combined, 45 states enacted 221 laws that address human trafficking. In 2014, 41 states considered 289 anti-trafficking bills and resolutions and in 2015, 41 states are currently considering legislation addressing an aspect of human trafficking. Cities and counties have also battled human trafficking through local measures and would appreciate an overarching and comprehensive federal response. Again, we want to work with you to advance this important legislation and strongly urge you to pass S. 178 quickly. We believe that this bill respects existing state authority in this area and will support state and local efforts to eradicate the terrible practice of human trafficking.

Respectfully,

National Conference of State Legislatures

The Council of State Governments

The United States Conference of Mayors

National League of Cities

National Association of Counties

International City/County Management Association

National Criminal Justice Association

National District Attorneys Association

National Sheriffs' Association

Major County Sheriffs' Association

National Association of Police Organizations

Major Cities Chiefs Association