

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2991

To establish a Department of Homeland Security Center for Countering Human Trafficking, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 18, 2021

Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To establish a Department of Homeland Security Center for Countering Human Trafficking, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Countering Human
5 Trafficking Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) the victim-centered approach must become
9 universally understood, adopted, and practiced;

1 (2) criminal justice efforts must increase the
2 focus on, and adeptness at, investigating and pros-
3 ecuting forced labor cases;

4 (3) corporations must eradicate forced labor
5 from their supply chains;

6 (4) the Department of Homeland Security must
7 lead by example—

8 (A) by ensuring that its government supply
9 chain of contracts and procurement are not
10 tainted by forced labor; and

11 (B) by leveraging all of its authorities
12 against the importation of goods produced with
13 forced labor; and

14 (5) human trafficking training, awareness, iden-
15 tification, and screening efforts—

16 (A) are a necessary first step for preven-
17 tion, protection, and enforcement; and

18 (B) should be evidence-based to be most
19 effective.

20 **SEC. 3. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER**
21 **FOR COUNTERING HUMAN TRAFFICKING.**

22 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland
24 Security shall operate, within U.S. Immigration and
25 Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Inves-

1 tations, the Center for Countering Human Traf-
2 ficking (referred to in this Act as “CCHT”).

3 (2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of CCHT shall be
4 to serve at the forefront of the Department of
5 Homeland Security’s unified global efforts to
6 counter human trafficking through law enforcement
7 operations and victim protection, prevention, and
8 awareness programs.

9 (3) ADMINISTRATION.—Homeland Security In-
10 vestigations shall—

11 (A) maintain a concept of operations that
12 identifies CCHT participants, funding, core
13 functions, and personnel; and

14 (B) update such concept of operations, as
15 needed, to accommodate its mission and the
16 threats to such mission.

17 (4) PERSONNEL.—

18 (A) DIRECTOR.—The Secretary of Home-
19 land Security shall appoint a CCHT Director,
20 who shall—

21 (i) be a member of the Senior Execu-
22 tive Service; and

23 (ii) serve as the Department of Home-
24 land Security’s representative on human
25 trafficking.

1 (B) MINIMUM CORE PERSONNEL REQUIRE-
2 MENTS.—Subject to appropriations, the Sec-
3 retary of Homeland Security shall ensure that
4 CCHT is staffed with at least 45 employees in
5 order to maintain continuity of effort, subject
6 matter expertise, and necessary support to the
7 Department of Homeland Security, including—

8 (i) employees who are responsible for
9 the Continued Presence Program and
10 other victim protection duties;

11 (ii) employees who are responsible for
12 training, including curriculum develop-
13 ment;

14 (iii) employees who are responsible for
15 stakeholder engagement, Federal inter-
16 agency coordination, multilateral partner-
17 ships, and policy;

18 (iv) employees who are responsible for
19 public relations, human resources, evalua-
20 tion, data analysis and reporting, and in-
21 formation technology;

22 (v) special agents and criminal ana-
23 lysts necessary to accomplish its mission of
24 combating human trafficking and the im-

1 portation of goods produced with forced
2 labor; and

3 (vi) managers.

4 (b) OPERATIONS UNIT.—The CCHT Director shall
5 operate, within CCHT, an Operations Unit, which shall,
6 at a minimum—

7 (1) support criminal investigations of human
8 trafficking (including sex trafficking and forced
9 labor)—

10 (A) by developing, tracking, and coordi-
11 nating leads; and

12 (B) by providing subject matter expertise;

13 (2) augment the enforcement of the prohibition
14 on the importation of goods produced with forced
15 labor through civil and criminal authorities;

16 (3) coordinate a Department-wide effort to con-
17 duct procurement audits and enforcement actions,
18 including suspension and debarment, in order to
19 mitigate the risk of human trafficking throughout
20 Department acquisitions and contracts; and

21 (4) support all CCHT enforcement efforts with
22 intelligence by conducting lead development, lead
23 validation, case support, strategic analysis, and data
24 analytics.

(c) PROTECTION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS

1 (c) PROTECTION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS
2 UNIT.—The CCHT Director shall operate, within CCHT,
3 a Protection and Awareness Programs Unit, which shall—

4 (1) incorporate a victim-centered approach
5 throughout Department of Homeland Security poli-
6 cies, training, and practices;

7 (2) operate a comprehensive Continued Pres-
8 ence program;

9 (3) conduct, review, and assist with Department
10 of Homeland Security human trafficking training,
11 screening, and identification tools and efforts;

12 (4) operate the Blue Campaign’s nationwide
13 public awareness effort and any other awareness ef-
14 forts needed—

15 (A) to encourage victim identification and
16 reporting to law enforcement; and

17 (B) to prevent human trafficking; and

18 (5) coordinate external engagement, including
19 training and events, regarding human trafficking
20 with critical partners, including survivors, non-
21 governmental organizations, corporations, multilat-
22 eral entities, law enforcement agencies, and other in-
23 terested parties.

1 **SEC. 4. SPECIALIZED INITIATIVES.**

2 (a) HUMAN TRAFFICKING INFORMATION MOD-
3 ERNIZATION INITIATIVE.—The CCHT Director, in con-
4 junction with the Science and Technology Directorate Of-
5 fice of Science and Engineering, shall develop a strategy
6 and proposal to modify systems and processes throughout
7 the Department of Homeland Security that are related to
8 CCHT’s mission in order to—

9 (1) decrease the response time to access victim
10 protections;

11 (2) accelerate lead development;

12 (3) advance the identification of human traf-
13 ficking characteristics and trends;

14 (4) fortify the security and protection of sen-
15 sitive information;

16 (5) apply analytics to automate manual proc-
17 esses; and

18 (6) provide artificial intelligence and machine
19 learning to increase system capabilities and enhance
20 data availability, reliability, comparability, and
21 verifiability.

22 (b) SUBMISSION OF PLAN.—Upon the completion of
23 the strategy and proposal under subsection (a), the Sec-
24 retary of Homeland Security shall submit a summary of
25 the strategy and plan for executing the strategy to—

1 (1) the Committee on Homeland Security and
2 Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

3 (2) the Committee on Homeland Security of the
4 House of Representatives.

5 **SEC. 5. REPORTS.**

6 (a) INFORMATION SHARING TO FACILITATE RE-
7 PORTS AND ANALYSIS.—Each subagency of the Depart-
8 ment of Homeland Security shall share with CCHT—

9 (1) any information needed by CCHT to de-
10 velop the strategy and proposal required under sec-
11 tion 5(a); and

12 (2) any additional data analysis to help CCHT
13 better understand the issues surrounding human
14 trafficking.

15 (b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year
16 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the CCHT
17 Director shall submit a report to Congress that identifies
18 any legislation that is needed to facilitate the Department
19 of Homeland Security’s mission to end human trafficking.

20 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

21 In addition to amounts otherwise authorized to be ap-
22 propriated, there is authorized to be appropriated to the
23 Secretary of Homeland Security to carry out this Act
24 \$14,000,000, which shall remain available until expended.

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