

H.R. 4383

THE “DHS HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION ACT OF 2016”

FACT SHEET

As introduced by
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In a report released on January 11, 2016 by the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG), which was entitled “ICE and USCIS Could Improve Data Quality and Exchange to Help Identify Potential Human Trafficking Cases,” auditors found gaps in the collection and sharing of information between Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) that resulted in the exploitation of the fiancé and work visa programs by human traffickers.

- The OIG found that:
 - Information systems and processes used by both ICE and USCIS to collect data on human traffickers were unreliable and incomplete;
 - ICE’s information collection system provided widely varying and incomplete data to investigators;
 - USCIS did not always collect the names and other identifying information about human traffickers provided in their victims’ visa applications;
 - Useful data that ICE and USCIS do keep is not routinely or systematically shared and that this lack of information sharing leaves both visa programs open for exploitation.
- OIG auditors determined that between 2005 and 2014, 17 of 32 known traffickers used visa programs to bring in victims who were exploited for either forced labor or prostitution. The report also found that 274 suspected traffickers successfully petitioned Federal officials to bring 425 family members or fiancés into the United States.
- The Blue Campaign is DHS’ unified effort to combat human trafficking by raising public awareness, training law enforcement and other community partners to detect and investigate possible cases, protecting victims, and bringing suspected traffickers to justice.
- Given the importance of data integrity in identifying, investigating, and prosecuting trafficking cases and tracking overall trends, DHS must put in place better systems to support the DHS’ Blue Campaign.
- The “DHS Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2016” directly addresses the OIG’s findings and would put DHS on a path to connecting the dots to help prevent the exploitation of immigration

programs by human traffickers. It would do so by requiring DHS to enhance coordination throughout the Department with respect to the collection, tracking, and sharing of information about known or suspected human traffickers.

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The “DHS Human Trafficking Prevention Act of 2016” would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to:

- Issue, within 180 days of enactment, Department-wide guidance to personnel on how to identify and record the names and other personally identifiable information of individuals suspected or convicted of human trafficking as well as practices to enhance collaboration within the Department through routine and systematic information sharing; and
- Ensure, within a year of enactment, that the information technology systems used to record and track information on alleged human traffickers are integrated.

Additionally, the bill directs the Inspector General to conduct a review of the implementation of Departmental guidance and integration of systems within 18 months of enactment.

Taken together, these measures will ensure that DHS components can acquire and access information necessary to prevent known or suspected human traffickers from trafficking new victims into the United States. This legislation is consistent with the Department’s Blue Campaign and Department-wide efforts to bring human traffickers to justice and protect victims.