



July 26, 2022

Dear Representative:

We write on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Department of Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS), Catholic Charities USA, Catholic Relief Services, and the Catholic Health Association of the United States to express our support for H.R. 6552, the "Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2022." This bipartisan legislation is critical for continuing and bolstering our nation's efforts to eradicate human trafficking and assist human trafficking survivors.

The Catholic Church remains a global leader in the fight against human trafficking and the rehabilitation of survivors. Pope Francis has [described](#) trafficking as a "deep wound that affects every one of us," and the bishops of the United States have [called](#) for "all necessary steps to address this injustice," including robust [appropriations](#) to support anti-trafficking efforts and victims' services. In the United States, Catholic Charities agencies, hospitals, and other ministries of the Church provide services to human trafficking survivors, including trauma-informed care, housing and nutrition assistance, and workforce development. Since 2000, Catholic Relief Services has addressed human trafficking through more than 145 projects around the world.

H.R. 6552 is an important step forward. We are pleased to see inclusion of the Employment and Education Program, which would help prevent re-exploitation of trafficking survivors and facilitate their integration or reintegration into society through social services that emphasize self-sufficiency. We have long joined trafficking survivors in calling for such a program. We also welcome the legislation's targeted efforts to prevent and detect trafficking of school-age children, especially in a "linguistically accessible, culturally responsive, age-appropriate, and trauma-informed fashion." Further, we applaud expanding efforts to prevent human trafficking abroad by encouraging the integration of counter-trafficking activities in international development and humanitarian assistance programs. Finally, we are pleased to see that H.R. 6552 extends authorization of the Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, which provides survivors with a seat at the table and empowers them to take an active part in constructing the common good.

We are grateful for Congress' longstanding, bipartisan commitment to combatting human trafficking, both in the United States and abroad. We urge you to further that commitment by supporting H.R. 6552.

Respectfully,

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U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

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