

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**25,000 Christians Urge Ivanka Trump to Protect Unaccompanied Minors in Danger of Trafficking at the U.S.-Mexico Border***World Relief and Women of Welcome gather signatures from concerned Americans across the country*

BALTIMORE – 25,000 Christians have joined World Relief, Women of Welcome, and other leading evangelical institutions in petitioning Ivanka Trump to protect vulnerable children at risk of trafficking due to the suspension of key protections under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA).

Through an effort organized by Women of Welcome, the 25,000th signature came just days before the 20th anniversary of the signing of the original Trafficking Victims Protection Act, the nation's foremost anti-trafficking law, which passed after significant advocacy from evangelical Christians.

The original [letter](#) sent on August 24th, 2020, included signatories from leaders at [World Relief](#), [International Justice Mission](#), [World Vision U.S.](#), [Bethany Christian Services](#), the [Faith Alliance Against Slavery and Trafficking](#), the [National Association of Evangelicals](#), the [Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention](#), the [National Latino Evangelical Coalition](#) and various other evangelical institutions. These leaders have voiced their concern to senior presidential advisor Ivanka Trump because she has been among the most vocal anti-trafficking and child protection advocates within the administration. In the intervening month and a half, tens of thousands of Americans have added their voices petitioning for the reinstatement of these protections that were [halted in March](#) due to concerns over the potential spread of COVID-19.

**Scott Arbeiter, president of World Relief**, commented, "It's been eight months since COVID-19 gained momentum in the U.S. and key child-protection elements of TVPRA were initially suspended at the border. While the administration has resumed normal activities in many sectors of public life, operations that could mean the difference between life and death for vulnerable children have not been resumed. The threat of trafficking does not diminish during a pandemic. If anything, it accelerates. The U.S. is overdue in our responsibility to care for the vulnerable within our purview."

The TVPRA requires that unaccompanied minors detained at the border be entrusted to the Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees a network of care partners that includes many faith-based nonprofits.

"As a mother, I cannot imagine treating children in the negligent way these children at the border continue to be treated," said **Bri Stensrud, Director of Women of Welcome**. "This isn't an immigration issue, it's a child safety issue. As an American, I cannot believe the country I love, which claims to be a haven to the weary and needy of the world, is intentionally turning a blind eye to this horrifying practice. And as a Christian, our failure to love and advocate for these vulnerable people is diametrically opposed to the teachings of Jesus."

To read the letter, click [here](#). Women of Welcome, a movement of evangelical women supported by World Relief, invites concerned Christians to [add their names](#) to the letter.

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*About World Relief:*

*World Relief is a global Christian humanitarian organization that seeks to overcome violence, poverty and injustice. Through love in action, we bring hope, healing and restoration to millions of the world's most vulnerable women, men and children through vital and sustainable programs in disaster response, health and child development, economic development and peacebuilding, as well as refugee and immigration services in the U.S. For 75 years, we've partnered with churches and communities, currently across more than 20 countries, to provide relief from suffering and help people rebuild their lives.*

*Learn more at [worldrelief.org](http://worldrelief.org).*

*About Women of Welcome:*

*Women of Welcome is a community dedicated to diving into the whole of Scripture to understand God's heart for the immigrant and refugee.*

*Learn more at [womenofwelcome.com](http://womenofwelcome.com).*