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World Relief Urges Congress to Reject H.R. 29, Warns It Will Hinder Fight Against Human Trafficking and Harm Vulnerable Children

Baltimore, Md., January 31, 2022 – World Relief joined with other like-minded organizations to send [a letter](#) today to members of Congress urging them to vote against H.R. 29, a bill recently introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. If signed into law in its current form, H.R. 29 would leave many vulnerable people fleeing persecution and violence shut out from protections offered under current law, including unaccompanied children who are among the most vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking.

“[H.R. 29] would effectively nullify several important provisions of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2008 governing the treatment of certain unaccompanied children. This bill, which was passed with broad bipartisan support and signed into law by President George W. Bush, has been a vital tool in protecting children and others who are uniquely vulnerable to human trafficking,” says the letter, which was signed by World Relief. Other signatories include International Justice Mission U.S., World Vision U.S., the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, the National Association of Evangelicals, the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, Bethany Christian Services and Women of Welcome. “Our concerns are rooted in our Christian faith, believing that each person is made in the image of God and is worthy of protection. In particular, a child unaccompanied by his or her parent(s) is uniquely vulnerable.”

World Relief is deeply concerned that H.R. 29 would roll back significant anti-trafficking protections by nullifying portions of the [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act \(TVPRA\)](#), which stipulates proper treatment to protect unaccompanied children. The TVPRA requires that unaccompanied children from non-contiguous countries who are encountered at the U.S. border be cared for in secure, child-appropriate settings until the U.S. government can determine their eligibility to remain lawfully in the United States.

“Unaccompanied children seeking asylum at our borders are uniquely vulnerable and worthy of our protection. Thankfully, current U.S. law ensures that these children are protected and are legally allowed to remain safely in the United States if they meet the necessary criteria,” said Jenny Yang, Senior Vice President of Advocacy and Policy at World Relief. “But if H.R. 29 is signed into law in its current form, many children will be turned away, forced to return to countries where they face increased risk of violence or trafficking. This bill would fail to treat unaccompanied children seeking protection in our country with the compassion and due process they deserve.”

As an organization grounded in Christian principles, World Relief believes that each person is made in the image of God and is precious in his sight. We urge Congress to continue protecting “the least of these” by voting against the H.R. 29 bill in its current form, and we urge Christians to voice their concerns with their lawmakers.

To learn more about World Relief, visit worldrelief.org.

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About World Relief

[World Relief](http://WorldRelief.org) is a global Christian humanitarian organization that brings sustainable solutions to the world’s greatest problems – disasters, extreme poverty, violence, oppression, and mass displacement. For over 75 years, we've partnered with churches and community leaders in the U.S. and abroad to bring hope, healing and transformation to the most vulnerable.