

being some 18 months after the provisions of Public Law 108–25 prohibited taxpayer funding of pro-prostitution groups like SANGRAM.

That SANGRAM was a high-risk candidate for not complying with Public Law 108–25 should not have been a surprise to USAID. SANGRAM was a cosigner, along with many other high-risk candidates, of a May 18, 2005 letter to President Bush opposing the anti-prostitution pledge. Subcommittee staff found posted on a USAID-sponsored Web site, a 5-year-old report from SANGRAM that states: “We believe that when involuntary initiation into prostitution occurs, a process of socialization within the institution of prostitution exists, whereby the involuntary nature of the business changes increasingly into one of active acceptance, not necessarily with resignation. This is not a coercive process.”

I agree with President Bush that “It takes a special kind of depravity to exploit and hurt the most vulnerable members of society. Human traffickers rob children of their innocence; they expose them to the worst of life before they have seen much of life. Traffickers tear families apart. They treat their victims as nothing more than goods and commodities for sale to the highest bidder.” It is inconceivable that an organization like SANGRAM could have received funding from the American taxpayer had USAID put in place an adequate management system to carry out Public Law 108–25.

On December 13, 2005, a large briefing team from the Department of State and USAID met with staff from the Subcommittee I chair concerning this matter, in order to demonstrate ownership of the problem and to lay-out corrective measures being taken. To my dismay and astonishment, the briefers were not prepared to discuss (and exhibited little knowledge of) the pass-through entity known as Avert that USAID established and which served as the mechanism whereby NGOs in India were monitored and financed with American tax dollars. Subcommittee staff knew more than the State/USAID briefing team about this matter thanks to Google searches on the web for critical documents that had not been provided to the Subcommittee by the Administration.

In the months since that December 13 appeal was made for an electronic registry, the Subcommittee request has inspired two pieces of legislation: first in the other body, and the second we are debating here today. This scandal of financing pro-prostitution groups by USAID was highlighted by the authors in both chambers as illustrating the need for this legislation.

I urge the swift passage of this legislation. If we are going to continue to spend taxpayer money, the American people deserve to know how it is being spent and by whom. Flagrantly disgusting examples of the misuse of taxpayer funds must be made known and eliminated.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by just simply saying that I don’t believe that we can overemphasize the importance of transparency in government, and especially as it relates to contracting. I would urge passage of this legislation. I am proud to be a cosponsor of it.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, the bill we are considering today, S. 2950, requires the Office

of Management and Budget to create a searchable database of federal grants and contracts accessible to the public on the Internet. I am pleased to support this bill.

In June, the House considered a watered down version of this bill, H.R. 5060. The House bill included only grants, leaving out hundreds of billions of dollars in annual spending on federal contracts. At the time, I urged Chairman DAVIS to work with me to include contract disclosure in the legislation.

The bill before us today is stronger and more comprehensive than the bill passed by the House in June. While the House bill covered only grants, the database created under this legislation will include all federal grants and contracts. If this bill is implemented properly, any citizen with Internet access will be able to examine a comprehensive set of records for information about federal spending. For each grant or contract awarded, the database will include details about the recipient of the award, as well as the amount of the award, the purpose of the funding action, and other relevant information.

There has been considerable confusion about what this bill does and does not do. The information that this bill requires to be posted on the Internet is not secret. In fact, there are existing databases that are accessible to Congress and the public that are already required to include the information covered in this bill.

Under current law, for example, there is a federal procurement database maintained by the General Services Administration. This database, called the Federal Procurement Data System, is required to contain significant amount of information about each federal contract.

Similarly, there is a grants database maintained by the Census Bureau, the Federal Assistance Data System, which collects information about domestic financial assistance awards. In addition, grants.gov and various databases maintained by individual agencies, contain some of this information.

But these databases don’t always contain the information that they are supposed to contain. They aren’t always kept up to date. And they can be difficult to use.

In essence, what this bill does is require that these existing databases be compiled into a new database that is more organized and more accessible.

Ordinarily, I would not be in favor of legislation that requires the government to spend money repackaging data that is already in existence. But this bill is an exception. The current state of the existing databases is so poor that Congress is justified in passing new legislation.

Ultimately, implementation will be key to the success of this bill. If the administration is not committed to making the legislation work, all we will get is another incomplete and hard-to-use database. My hope is that by passing this bill with broad, bipartisan support, we are sending a signal to the administration that it needs to do a better job.

Members of Congress from both parties and both the House and Senate have worked hard to make this bill a reality. I want to compliment Senator OBAMA and Senator COBURN, in particular, for their leadership. They put aside partisanship to forge the bill we are considering today. I also want to thank Chairman DAVIS for agreeing to expand the scope of this bill to cover contracts.

The legislation we are passing today is not comprehensive reform; it will not restore honesty and accountability in government. It’s a modest, bipartisan step in the direction of open government. But in the climate we’re currently in, even a small step forward is worth supporting and celebrating.

I urge support of this legislation.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the passage of S. 2590.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2590.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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#### HOURLY MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

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#### CORRECTING ENROLLMENT OF S. 2590, FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2006

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker’s table the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 114) providing for corrections to the enrollment of the bill S. 2590, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate concurrent resolution, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 114

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That, in the enrollment of the bill S. 2590, the Secretary of the Senate shall make the following corrections:*

(1) In section 2(a), strike paragraphs (2) and (3) and insert the following:

“(2) FEDERAL AWARD.—The term ‘Federal award’—

“(A) means Federal financial assistance and expenditures that—

“(i) include grants, subgrants, loans, awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of financial assistance;

“(ii) include contracts, subcontracts, purchase orders, task orders, and delivery orders;

“(B) does not include individual transactions below \$25,000; and

“(C) before October 1, 2008, does not include credit card transactions.