

crafting the bill. But I am fearful that, once again, we are at risk of basically being cast aside because of political concerns.

I ask the majority leader to reconsider his view that relevant amendments are too difficult to vote on. We have to return to regular order. We have to have a fair and healthy debate on legislation—especially legislation such as this that has not gone through the committee process, has good, strong support, but needs to have further input from Members all over the country.

I appreciate the consideration of the body here in trying to advance a measure that will help us not only when it comes to access for our fishermen and our sports men and women, provides for further conservation measures, but also helps us to advance a process in this body that at this time we so desperately lack.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise to speak about a very troubling issue—to speak about innocent lives being stolen from communities and neighborhoods across our country and around the globe. I speak of the issue of human trafficking.

Last month, in more than 100 U.S. cities—just last month—168 children were rescued from sex trafficking and 281 pimps were arrested on Federal and State charges.

The weeklong campaign known as Operation Cross Country was conducted by the FBI, law enforcement officials, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. It underscores a heartbreaking reality: Human trafficking is not a far-away problem. It is happening right here in America, in all 50 States.

Each year thousands of men, women, and children are robbed of their basic freedom to live as they choose. They become victims of a rampant and evil crime, coerced through intimidation and even through violence to work as laborers or prostitutes. According to estimates from the Polaris Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting human trafficking, there were more than 5,000 potential trafficking cases in America last year. However, the precise number of domestic victims is unknown.

It should be noted that sex trafficking affects individuals of all backgrounds and races, but it disproportionately impacts women, both domestically and internationally. According to the Polaris Project, 85 percent of sex trafficking victims in the United States are women. Although news headlines often glibly refer to a “war on women” in political terms, we as policy makers might well devote more of our energy to the issue of sex trafficking—a real war, a daily war, a

nightmarish war—faced by the most vulnerable among us—young women who are bought and sold against their will for sex.

I stand with colleagues from both political parties in calling for an end to this nightmare. We must not ignore the horror stories on our doorsteps. Earlier this year 16 children ranging in age from 13 to 17 years old were rescued from a sex trafficking operation at the Super Bowl, one of our most celebrated events—the scenario of horror for these 13- to 17-year-olds. These young Americans deserve justice and they deserve rehabilitation.

Our friends in the House of Representatives have recently passed a package of bills on antitrafficking, and I hope we will soon consider similar efforts in the Senate. To highlight a few, Senator RUBIO has introduced a bill to help protect children in foster care from becoming victims of trafficking; Senator CORNYN has introduced legislation for increasing federal resources available to trafficking victims; and Senator KLOBUCHAR has introduced legislation to help ensure that minors who are sold for sex are not prosecuted as perpetrators but properly treated as the victims they really are.

This week I have introduced the End Trafficking Act of 2014. Similar to the legislation put forward by my colleagues, my bill would ensure victims of trafficking receive the treatment they need to lead healthy, free, and productive lives. One proposal in my bill would be a court-based pilot program modeled after Hawaii’s girls courts, similar to the Federal drug court system. Rather than being correctly treated as victims, trafficked juveniles are often charged with a delinquency offense and detained. Many do not receive the counseling or support they need while in detention and some even return to the trafficker who abused them.

My bill supports a specialized court docket and integrated judicial supervision that would put the well-being of the victim first. Detention does not amount to rescue, and these victims need to be rescued. They should have an opportunity to return home and receive treatment.

Human trafficking is a complex problem that demands multifaceted solutions. Supporting the victims is only one part of the equation. We must also target those who perpetuate these atrocious crimes. The legislation I have introduced also seeks to punish those responsible for trafficking—the providers and the buyers—the pimps and the johns. First, there should be strict enforcement of laws already on the books that prohibit the purchase of sex with minors. Second, child victims should have a longer statute of limitations period during which to file civil lawsuits against their traffickers. Finally, those who distribute or benefit financially from commercial advertising that promotes prostitution should face criminal charges also. My bill would do all three.

We have seen the value of coordination among local, State and Federal agencies to fight trafficking. This was certainly true in Operation Cross Country. Working together, agencies and law enforcement partners can improve the ways they target traffickers to help victims.

We all need to realize that in the United States—the freest, most prosperous nation in the world—traffickers still find and transit victims. Our efforts to fight trafficking within our borders are important to fight against trafficking worldwide. There are some 21 million people around the world who endure this cruel form of modern day slavery. There is no other way to put it. Although the United States cannot single-handedly eradicate the problem, we can serve as a model for other countries to follow by preventing trafficking and supporting victims here at home.

Again, the title of the bill is the End Trafficking Act of 2014—introduced this week. I am looking for cosponsors. I am looking for Republicans, Democrats, and Independents to come forward and say with a unified voice that this Senate, this Congress, this Federal Government, intends to put the full weight of our efforts toward combating this serious national and international problem.

I suggest the absence of a quorum and, following procedure, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided between Republicans and Democrats for the remaining period of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROTECTING WATER AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today I rise in support of Barrasso amendment No. 3453 to the underlying bill. This amendment actually has 36 cosponsors—36 of my fellow colleagues have cosponsored legislation called the Protecting Water and Property Rights Act of 2014, and this legislation is identical to the amendment we have on the floor today.

The amendment restricts the expansion of Federal authority by this administration’s EPA to encompass all the wet areas on farms, ranches, and suburban homes all across America. More specifically, the amendment eliminates the administration’s proposed rule—a rule to implement this