Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time. I want to thank all of the sponsors of the legislation for bringing it forward, this and the other two bills that we have also considered.

I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

The passage of this legislation shows the House's commitment to providing the necessary tools and policies to help reduce child sex trafficking and better serve these victims, and on the recommendations and admonition of my colleagues today, again I would say, these victims in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, this is good work that we are doing here. I submit, it is probably the type of work that our constituents are calling us to work across the aisle to accomplish.

During the human trafficking roundtables I have held in my district, law enforcement officials have consistently raised the need to make community members aware of the real and present threat of human trafficking. We must work to not only educate children, but also families and the general public, about the safety risks.

The statistics on sex trafficking and exploitation among young people are startling. Approximately one out of six runaway youth are likely victims of sex trafficking, and roughly one out of three youth are lured into prostitution, victimization, sex-trafficked within 48 hours of running away from home.

This is happening all over the country and not just in my home State. Therefore, I urge all Members to lead efforts in their districts to continue the conversation about human trafficking to learn what more we can do in our communities and to curtail this heinous crime.

H.R. 246 is another step to educating our communities about human trafficking victims, and it continues our work to ensure that we are doing what we can to help reduce this horrible crime.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 246.

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 Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 246.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PRIME MINISTER NETANYAHU, IRAN, AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I support Speaker BOEHNER's invitation to Prime Minister Netanyahu to address this body to discuss the Iranian threat and the growing instability in the Middle East due to the rise of global jihadist networks.

A nuclear-capable Iran will spark an arms race in the region and directly threaten America's interests as Iran continues to make progress on its intercontinental ballistic missile program. But as grave as this threat is to America, it pales in comparison to the existential threat that it poses to our democratic ally, the Jewish State of Israel.

No other nation is more familiar with the Iranian threat and the pitfalls of our ongoing nuclear negotiations than Israel, and that is why it is imperative that we hear firsthand from Prime Minister Netanyahu on Israel's assessment of Iran's nuclear program and other terrorist threats that are emanating from the Middle East.

Thank you, Speaker BOEHNER, for that invitation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JERMAINE KEARSE

(Mr. HECK of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, Gandhi once famously said: ''Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.''

Jermaine Kearse has been making plays in Washington State for more than 10 years, first as a Lancer at Lakes High, then as a Husky at the University of Washington, and since 2012 as, of course, a Seattle Seahawk.

You may very well have seen his game-winning catch in the NFC Championship game in the end zone. But that game wasn't a cakewalk for Jermaine by any means. There were interceptions and there were drops.

It was on the sidelines, however, that one of Jermaine's injured teammates said to him to forget about it and to remember that there are still plays to be made here.

Ever want to give up? Ever think it is too hard? Ever think the odds are stacked against you? Remember the will of Jermaine Kearse and the Seattle Seahawks. Tell yourself there are still plays to be made.

Congratulations, number 15. Lakewood and the entire 10th Congressional District are very, very proud of you and, frankly, we can't wait to see you fly in Glendale and make the New England Patriots shake and the earth move.

Go, Hawks.

ANWR DESIGNATION IS AN ENERGY MORATORIUM

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an area of great concern. The Obama administration has just announced their intention to designate more than 12 million acres of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska as wilderness.

Now, this move would place a de facto moratorium on oil and gas production on the largest onshore, unexplored, and potentially productive areas in the United States.

While this area only represents about 8 percent of the total size of ANWR, the Energy Information Administration suggests a great potential for the recovery of oil and gas based upon nearby plays in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the President often touts America's move towards greater energy independence. The irony is that most of that, much of this production has occurred on private lands and by private hands. Placing new prohibitions on Federal lands is simply doublespeak.

Thomas Edison once said, and I quote, ''Seeming to do is not doing.''

Mr. Speaker, while we may not be focused on energy prices at the moment, planning for the future is as prudent as it is wise. I encourage the administration to think about our future. The American people deserve as much.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 26, 2015.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena for documents issued by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana in connection with a criminal case currently pending before that court.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I will determine whether compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) is recognized

for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of packages of human trafficking legislation to be considered by the House of Representatives this week, 12 different pieces of legislation. I also rise today in support of all the good work done by my colleagues here in Congress on the issue of human trafficking.

Mr. Speaker, as a former United States Ambassador, I was exposed firsthand to the horrors of human trafficking on an international level. I witnessed and reported on devastating consequences of human trafficking, where innocent women and children were dragged into the dark abyss of sex slavery. But never in my wildest dreams did I ever think human trafficking was so rampant right here in the United States of America. Americans are being forced into sexual slavery by ruthless human traffickers.

Mr. Speaker, right now there are young women being forced into prostitution in virtually every district across this Nation. It is hiding in plain sight. In fact, I was shocked to learn that my own hometown of St. Louis, Missouri, has been identified as one of the top 20 areas for sex trafficking in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, this problem is before our eyes. It is in our communities, it is in our neighborhoods, and it is in our cul-de-sacs. It is right here before us. Every year, thousands of young Americans' lives are impacted by this despicable crime. However, there is hope.

I take hope from the work done by the law enforcement professionals who are on the front lines every day protecting our Nation's children from those who would seek to exploit them. I take hope from those who work in victims services and their tireless efforts to help survivors recover, heal, and forge new lives out of the horrors of sexual enslavement. Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I take hope from all the survivors, the survivors of this hideous crime. Their strength gives us strength, their resolve gives us inspiration, and their steadfast commitment to ending sex trafficking gives us all the courage to fight.

□ 1730

Mr. Speaker, because of the efforts of many individuals and groups, I am happy to report that Congress has taken notice of this serious problem. Years of work by Representatives NOEM, POE, PAULSEN, HULTGREN, REICHERT, SMITH, among many others, have raised awareness of this issue and have laid the foundation for the long overdue action Congress is presently taking. I am grateful that many of my colleagues have held events in their home districts to raise awareness and education of this crime.

Last year in St. Louis, I participated, along with Judge POE, in a conference at which the private and public sectors came together to share best practices about combating human trafficking. Representatives DAVIS, HUDSON, WALBERG, ROSKAM, COFFMAN, HUIZENGA, and HECK, among so many other Members of my colleagues, have all held human trafficking events in their districts to raise awareness and offer solutions to end sexual assault and human trafficking. I applaud these efforts, and I look forward to continuing this work for years to come.

However, Mr. Speaker, there is much, much work to be done. As legislators, we have an obligation to come together and do something because we can, because we should, and because we must.

The legislation that we are voting on this week in the House of Representatives will provide prosecutors with the tools they need to prosecute traffickers and will provide social service providers with the resources they need to assist victims in healing. These bills will mandate much-needed awareness and training, and will provide government agencies with the accurate, dependable statistics they need to combat this terrible crime.

I am so proud of the action this body has taken to recognize and address this problem, which has so long festered in the shadows.

I am equally proud of all my colleagues today who have come to the floor to speak up for the victims of human trafficking, to show them they are not alone, that we are with them, and that we will no longer be silent in the face of such depravity.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to one of my colleagues, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN). He is reintroducing his bill, the Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act. The bill urges nations to recognize the link between the purchase of commercial sex and the prevalence of human trafficking in society, and to confront the former in order to effectively combat the latter. The bill targets demand.

He has hosted anti-trafficking forums for Members of Congress at which the anti-trafficking documentary ''Nefarious'' was shown. The producers of the film from Exodus Cry attended.

He is a member of the House leadership Human Trafficking Task Force and the Human Trafficking Caucus, and he has worked with the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission on efforts to help human trafficking victims both in the U.S. and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois, RANDY HULTGREN.

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in recognition of Human Trafficking Awareness Month and Human Trafficking Awareness Week here in the House of Representatives.

I especially want to thank my good friend and colleague from Missouri, ANN WAGNER, for hosting tonight's Special Order.

Today, human trafficking represents a modern form of slavery. It is a crisis that victimizes 21 million people worldwide. In my home State of Illinois, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center estimates that 25,000 women and girls are exploited each year by sex traffickers. Because of its strategic location as a major transportation and commercial center, Chicago has become a major national hub for human trafficking.

As a member of the Congressional Human Trafficking Task Force, we are working to coordinate the efforts of the congressional leadership and international anti-trafficking groups to punish perpetrators, rescue and bring hope to victims, and assist nations in their fight against the global epidemic of trafficking in human beings.

Through legislation like that which the House will bring to the floor this week, I am pleased to see this body take critical steps to target the perpetrators of human trafficking and enhance efforts toward eradicating it.

Later this week, I will be reintroducing my own bill, the Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act. Evidence suggests a clear link between the purchase of commercial sex and the prevalence of sex trafficking in a society. Where there is a robust demand for commercial sex, human trafficking as an industry and practice thrives as well. The Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Act highlights this link and requires national governments to factor in their efforts to combat demand as part of their overall fight against human trafficking.

Human trafficking is the most insidious of criminal enterprises. It targets the youngest and most vulnerable in society, stealing their innocence and depriving them of any hope of escaping a downward spiral of depravity and despair. Thankfully, we are all becoming increasingly aware of the extent of human trafficking and the magnitude of the effects on its victims. Through the persistent efforts of international anti-human trafficking groups, national, State, and local governments, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, and dedicated individuals concerned about the communities in which they live, we have made sustained inroads towards eradicating the scourge of human trafficking. We can envision the day when human trafficking will no longer represent a blight on humanity, a day when victims will experience complete restoration.

Again, I want to thank my colleague from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for this opportunity to speak.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw attention to this bracelet that I have on that many of my colleagues are going to be wearing over

the next 2 days as we pass 12 pieces of human trafficking legislation. This tab bracelet was handmade by dedicated volunteers to raise funds for Crisis Aid International safe homes in my own hometown of St. Louis, Missouri. The safe homes provide comfort and support for young women rescued from the horrors of sex trafficking.

The bracelet project, which was inspired by an 11-year-old victim wanting to make a difference, has become the symbol of hope for these precious young people.

Join me. I ask all my colleagues to join me in wearing this bracelet to spread awareness about the scourge of sex slavery.

Next, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio, Representative JOYCE BEATTY.

Last year, Congresswoman BEATTY partnered with Senator PORTMAN from Ohio to introduce bipartisan, bicameral legislation, the Bringing Missing Children Home Act, to improve law enforcement reporting and response procedures in cases of missing children, the most vulnerable victims of child trafficking and sexual exploitation.

This Congress, she introduces H.R. 246, which would improve and update the Missing Children's Assistance Act in order to reflect the current state of Federal law and reinforce that children who are sex-trafficked or sexually exploited are victims and not criminals.

I am a proud cosponsor of the gentlewoman's legislation, and it is my pleasure to yield to the gentlelady from Ohio, Representative JOYCE BEATTY.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, first let me just say thank you to my colleague from Missouri, Congresswoman ANN WAGNER, for organizing tonight's Special Order hour but, probably more importantly, a bipartisan Special Order hour. And let me say, I proudly wear this bracelet in honor of all of those survivors.

I also want to note that her work as a former United States Ambassador exposed her firsthand to the horrors of human trafficking on an international level. Her work has raised awareness of this problem and has laid the foundation for congressional action.

Despite international efforts to eradicate human trafficking, it still exists and affects communities in every country, including the United States. This transnational crime exploits the weakest and often subjects victims to mental and physical abuse.

Human trafficking is an estimated multibillion-dollar-a-year international enterprise that forces the weakest among us into the horrors of modern day slavery.

It is also one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world. In fact, according to the United States State Department, human trafficking is the world's second-largest criminal enterprise, Mr. Speaker, after illegal drug trade. It is forced prostitution, domestic slavery, and forced labor.

It is also oftentimes underground and masked so well that it is difficult to recognize. These victims are our housekeepers, our farmworkers brought into the United States by labor brokers who promised a job but enslaved these victims instead. Sex traffickers target the weakest members of our society by using violence or threats or other coercive means to keep victims enslaved.

Human trafficking deprives individuals of their most basic and unalienable rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That is why we must continue to work to end human trafficking and support the victims by providing resources and assistance during their time of need.

My home State of Ohio is the fifth-leading State for human trafficking. In Ohio, an estimated 1,100 Ohio children become victims, with some 3,000 more at risk. In fact, a preliminary report on the scope of the problem in Ohio cited that 13 years of age is the most common age for youth to become victims of child sex trafficking.

During my time in public service, as a public servant both in the Ohio Legislature and here, I have heard story after story of heartbreaking personal human trafficking experiences from Ohio. Just 2 weeks ago, my hometown paper, The Columbus Dispatch, reported that a massage spa in central Ohio was serving as a front for organized prostitution, where 18 women who spoke little or no English were forced to work there, eat there, and sleep there. Authorities believe that these women were likely trafficked into the United States to work in a sex trade.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to have a copy of this article placed into the RECORD.

[From the Columbus Dispatch, Jan. 15, 2015]

(By Theodore Decker)

Behind the Powell storefront—between a dentist's office and a dessert shop—the women slept each night on massage tables.

Rarely, investigators say, did they appear to leave the Amsun Massage Spa, a business that caught the attention of Powell police not long after it opened last fall in a strip mall at 128 E. Olentangy St.

The women worked there. They ate there. They slept there. They might not have had a choice, authorities said.

Local, state and federal investigators announced yesterday that the massage parlor was a front for organized prostitution and was one of four addresses raided in Delaware and Franklin counties as part of Powell's investigation. A parallel federal investigation resulted in searches of other addresses, although details of those raids were under court-ordered seal yesterday.

The combined searches turned up 18 women who speak little or no English and might have been trafficked to work in the sex trade. Investigators said various agencies have stepped in to provide shelter and other support to the women.

''They don't know the culture, they don't speak the language, and they're very untrusting of law enforcement,'' said Nathan Emery, special agent in charge of the Columbus office of the federal Homeland Security Investigations agency.

The women fear deportation, a threat that was used by their employers to keep them in line, police said. Authorities are trying to pin down their identities and countries of origin.

''We are not just arresting those who are suspected of trafficking women for sex, we are also rescuing those who may be victims of this heinous crime,'' said Cmdr. Gary Cameron of the Columbus police narcotics bureau.

Powell's search warrants were served at Amsun Massage in Powell; Amsun Massage, 1000 High St., Worthington; Rainbow Massage, 5564 Hilliard-Rome Rd. on the Far West Side; and a Jasmine Court residence on the Far West Side.

A man and woman from Columbus were arrested: Xiao Shuang Chao, 56, and Qing Xu, whose age was unknown. Investigators aren't sure of the couple's relationship but said they operated the businesses locally. They face organized-crime charges in Delaware County Common Pleas Court.

Powell Police Chief Gary Vest said that soon after Amsun opened, his department was tipped that women were living there and providing sex-related services to clients.

Emery said women are brought to the United States by human traffickers and, instead of finding a better life, ''to pay off their debts, they're put into forced servitude.''

Mrs. BEATTY. Because of the importance of this issue in my State and in our Nation, I engaged during my first term in Congress to pass a sex trafficking bill, 400–9. Last year, as you heard from Congresswoman WAGNER, I partnered with Senator PORTMAN from Ohio to introduce bipartisan, bicameral legislation, the Bringing Missing Children Home Act, H.R. 3905.

This Congress, I have introduced H.R. 246, which would improve and update the Missing Children's Assistance Act in order to reflect the current state of Federal law and reinforce that children who are sex-trafficked or sexually exploited are victims and not criminals.

Lastly, my bill would add the phrase ''sex child trafficking, including child prostitution'' to section b(1)(P) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act to fight the perception that sex trafficking is a voluntary, victimless crime.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, in speaking against and bringing awareness of human trafficking. Our country, our constituents, our children need our help.

Mrs. WAGNER. I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership and her friendship. Thank you so much, Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY.

Next, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from Texas, Congressman TED POE. Judge POE has been a longstanding advocate for victims of crime. He has dedicated his life to promoting justice and giving voice to survivors and, as a Member of Congress, has been a tireless advocate for legislation that provides a comprehensive approach to address the problem of human trafficking in the United States. Congressman POE has been a friend and a colleague and a kindred spirit to me in the House of Representatives. His championing of victims' rights has inspired countless survivors of crime to stand up for their rights and demand change.

I yield to the Congressman from Texas, Judge TED POE.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentlewoman from Missouri for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting that this effort to combat human trafficking in the United States, in my opinion, is led by the ladies of the House on both sides, the Republicans and the Democrats. The spunk of my friend from Missouri and all of the others who have spoken and will speak later on these pieces of legislation is obvious.

□ 1745

There are 12 bills, Mr. Speaker. They are bipartisan bills on one subject. As long as I have been here, I have never seen so much attention by all Members of the House on both sides of the aisle moving and trying to fix a problem as this.

Twelve pieces of legislation—many of those passed last year, they just never got voted on in the Senate—and we are bringing them up again. Once again, it is the ladies to whom America owes a great gratitude to. My grandmother used to say that there is nothing more powerful than a woman who has made up her mind. The ladies of the House have made up their mind on the issue of trafficking. They are not going to tolerate it, and neither are the rest of us.

Mr. Speaker, it is ironic to me that this tremendous amount of legislation—this important subject—is getting so little play in the national media. It seems that the media and America, I guess, is more concerned about the disappearance of air in footballs than they are about the disappearance of America's children that are being trafficked across the United States.

The worst thing that is taking place among our youth is the slavery that is happening to them. The runaways, the throwaways, and the stowaways of America's children are disappearing into this scourge of slavery, as it has been rightfully called.

Many of us remember how we got involved in trying to prevent this. My first experience was meeting a little girl in Peru at the age of 7 whose name is Lilly. Lilly could not speak because of the numerous assaults that had been committed against her before she was rescued. It is not just kids in South America or Central America or overseas; it is America's children that are being trafficked.

We have to make it clear that these young girls, primarily, that are on the streets and that are being sold and bartered by these slave masters are not criminals. These are not prostitutes. These are victims of crimes. America needs to change its focus and its understanding that when we see that occurring, that person is a victim, not a criminal.

As has been mentioned, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the leading ways that criminal organizations are making money because, in the drug trade, you get drugs and you sell them one time; plus the risk of apprehension is greater for drug sales than with the selling of kids. Children can be sold multiples times a night, and they are.

When the trafficker is captured, very often, nothing happens, so that is why this lucrative trade continues to make money, but it also continues to make money because there is a demand in this country for this scourge.

These men, primarily, that abuse children are criminals. They are sex offenders. They are child molesters. Some call them johns. They are not johns. John was a good guy. He is in the Bible. Why would we call them that?

They are child molesters, and we need to recognize them for what they are. We need to know who they are. Their names need to be published, and they need to go to jail for what they do because we have to go after the demand.

That is why I have introduced the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act along with my friend CAROLYN MALONEY from New York. CAROLYN MALONEY—a New York Democrat and a Texas conservative Republican, that is just about as bipartisan as you can get, Mr. Speaker. We are separated by a common language, to coin the phrase; but on this issue, like most Members of the House, we are united that we are going to stop this.

This bill does a few things. It goes after the trafficker, the slave master. It helps law enforcement capture them and put them in jail. That is why we build prisons. Then it goes after the victim—the child—rescues them, restores them, and finds a place for them.

Did you know, Mr. Speaker, that in the United States, according to the Humane Society, there are about 3,000 animal shelters? We need them all. I have got three Dalmatians. I got one of them from a shelter in Dallas. I call him the weapon of mass destruction. We need those shelters.

But did you know that, according to Shared Hope International, there are only about 300 beds for minor sex-trafficked victims in the United States? That ought not to be. They need more places to go when the police rescue them.

God bless the police. Many times, when they find these children, they know they are sex-trafficked victims, but there is no place to put them, so they put them in the juvenile justice system. That is not a good idea, but that is the only place they are safe. We need to find residences and homes for them. That is what this bill does.

The third thing it does is it goes after the demand, the person in the middle, the customer that abuses children, the rapist. We are going after those guys, Mr. Speaker. The days of ''boys being boys'' is over. Those people are going to be arrested and prosecuted for the crimes that they have committed.

Mr. Speaker, I insert into the RECORD some of the numerous anti-trafficking organizations that have helped all of us in this legislation.

ANTI-TRAFFICKING, CHILD WELFARE, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Children at Risk (Houston), Rights for Girls, Shared Hope International, End Child Prostitution and Trafficking—USA, National Children's Alliance, National Association to Protect Children, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Equality Now, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Fraternal of Police, National Association of Police Organizations, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Criminal Justice Association, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I call these groups the victims' posse that helps us in this issue.

The last thing I want to mention, Mr. Speaker, is I used to prosecute criminals. I was a judge in criminal court for 22 years. Sexual assault is what it is called now, but the crime really is rape. It is rape of America's greatest resource: children.

We cannot tolerate this. We ask sometimes: Why are we even here? Well, I can tell you why we are here. We are here to make sure that all Americans, including American children and those immigrants that have been sold into the United States, are protected from crimes like rape.

Mr. Speaker, children are not for sale. I am glad to see that the House is making sure that they will not be for sale in the future. I thank the gentlelady for the time.

And that is just the way it is.

Mrs. WAGNER. Thank you, Judge POE, for your tremendous leadership in this area and so many others dealing with victims' rights.

It is now my pleasure to recognize the gentlewoman from New Hampshire, Representative ANN KUSTER. Representative KUSTER has been a strong proponent of human and women's rights, advocating for a number of bills that support fighting sexual assault and human trafficking, including her bipartisan legislation to improve whistleblower protections which was passed into law last year to protect military members who report instances of sexual abuse.

Last Congress, Representative KUSTER and I joined together in coauthoring a letter condemning the kidnapping of nearly 300 girls by the terrorist group Boko Haram and calling on the United States Government to work with the United Nations to enact more comprehensive financial sanctions against the organization.

I thank her for her leadership on this area, and it is my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire, Representative ANN KUSTER.

Ms. KUSTER. Thank you, Judge POE, and to my dear colleague, ANN WAGNER, and to all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for tackling this issue.

I am proud to join my colleagues in passing these six commonsense bills

which I have pushed for across the aisle to strengthen protections for victims of sex trafficking, and Judge POE has done a great job setting the stage here for the child who is the victim of sex trafficking.

I think we all need to work on our language and our understanding. He is absolutely correct. I look forward to passing more of these reforms tomorrow and to continuing our bipartisan work together.

It saddens and astonishes me that in today's world, human trafficking remains such a serious problem both here at home and abroad. Throughout the world, thousands of women and underage children are being trafficked and forced to commit sexual acts against their will.

As Judge POE so eloquently stated, rape, that is what we are talking about. It is sickening that individuals advertise and promote this heinous practice in order to make a quick profit. Representative WAGNER's legislation, the SAVE Act, which I helped to cointroduce, would penalize individuals who knowingly host and sell advertisements for the commercial exploitation of minors and trafficking victims.

Last Congress, as she eloquently stated, I was very proud to reach across the aisle and join Representative WAGNER to lead all House women—every single House woman Member, Republican and Democrat—in urging the Obama administration to push the United Nations Security Council to add Boko Haram to the Al-Qaida Sanctions List, following the abduction of nearly 300 schoolgirls threatened to be sold into sexual slavery by this terrorist group.

The horrific kidnapping of the female Nigerian school students captured the world's shock and horror; however, human trafficking is not just a foreign issue. Together, we can be a powerful bipartisan voice against the horrors of this and other instances of human trafficking.

Both Democrats and Republicans in the House understand the importance of working together to protect women and girls, and they know that trafficking isn't just a political issue, it is a human issue.

I have organized discussions on this topic back home in New Hampshire where I have heard from community leaders, law enforcement officials, academic researchers, advocates, and—most importantly and, frankly, most eloquently—the trafficking victims themselves about the ongoing occurrence of human and sex trafficking taking place right here in our own backyard.

Domestic child sex trafficking is a serious problem in the United States, with an estimated 293,000 American youth at risk of commercial sex trafficking and exploitation.

It is imperative that we pass these bills to help law enforcement rescue domestic victims, track down their exploiters, provide additional tools for prosecutors to treat trafficked minors as victims instead of criminals, and ensure access to protective services. Again, I commend Judge POE for his eloquent description.

I applaud the House leadership for bringing to a vote these bipartisan bills to prevent trafficking and provide support to victims. As a mother, I honestly cannot even imagine the anguish and the pain that these families go through as they fight to bring their loved ones back home.

It is essential that we pass these bills and, moving forward, that we do everything together to support States' and countries' efforts to eliminate human trafficking.

Thank you, Representative WAGNER, and to all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for organizing this worthy effort.

Mrs. WAGNER. I thank the gentlewoman from New Hampshire for her leadership and her friendship on so many matters that we come together.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to introduce the gentlewoman from Tennessee, Representative DIANE BLACK. She was an original cosponsor of my SAVE Act that we will be introducing tomorrow and that I will have the pleasure to talk about on the floor during debate tomorrow.

She has sponsored roundtables in her district with law enforcement and community leaders on the impact of human trafficking in her home State of Tennessee, and she has worked with End Slavery Tennessee to see firsthand their efforts to combat trafficking in her State.

She is a leader among us for all victims, all those who have no voice. She is a friend and a dear colleague. It is my pleasure to yield to the representative from Tennessee, Congresswoman DIANE BLACK.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank the gentlelady and my good friend from Missouri for yielding to me, and I also thank her for all her tireless hours of work in not only bringing up this issue so that we will be more aware, but also in finding solutions so that we can help those that are victims.

I am honored to wear the bracelet that is made by the survivors, and I thank her for her endless and tireless work on behalf of these young women—young women and men—who have become victims.

Mr. Speaker, for many Americans, the issue of human trafficking is far removed from their daily lives, something that is relegated to foreign countries and maybe history books, but the truth is human sex trafficking is the third largest criminal enterprise in the world, with an estimated 300,000 young Americans at risk of becoming victims.

According to the Department of Justice, those most likely to fall prey to this heartbreaking crime are 12-to 14-year-old girls. These young women are someone's daughters, and we cannot turn a blind eye to their plight.

Last year, I had the opportunity to visit End Slavery Tennessee, a nonprofit that works tirelessly to confront trafficking in my State. Their mission is taken from the Book of Isaiah, ''to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners.''

This week, the House will take meaningful steps to fulfill this vision by taking up a series of bipartisan bills addressing the impact of trafficking. This includes the SAVE Act, sponsored by my good friend from Missouri, legislation that I cosponsored to go after the online advertisers who profit off of the sale of these innocent victims.

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Mr. Speaker, no single act of Congress will stop all acts of trafficking, or even bring justice for every victim whose innocence has been stolen by this evil activity, but we cannot let our inability to do everything stop us from doing something.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership on this issue and so many others.

It is now my pleasure to yield to a brandnew freshman Member, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER). Combating human trafficking is a priority for Congressman WALKER, and this is his very first bill introduced here in Washington, the Human Trafficking Detection Act of 2015. It aims to help end this unconscionable industry. North Carolina is ranked as a top State for labor and sex trafficking, and this vital legislation works to effectively train and inform Department of Homeland Security personnel to better detect and intersect human traffickers and their victims.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman WAGNER for her work in organizing this Special Order, and I also thank Representative MARK MEADOWS in allowing us to lead with such an important piece of legislation.

It was only a week ago that we celebrated the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., who famously said: ''Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.''

We now have the opportunity to act upon one of the greatest injustices of our time—the growing criminal industry of human trafficking.

All across America, vulnerable young men, women, children, and even entire families, are being victimized and exploited in unspeakable ways. These precious human beings are seen by their traffickers as a commodity, valued only for the profit they can turn. We must not remain silent about such depravity. Rather, we must engage with immediate fervor on this significant humanitarian crisis.

Victims of human trafficking can literally be hidden in plain sight. However, we know that the United States is considered a leading destination for human traffickers. It is a top source of income for organized crime and involves more than half the street gangs in our Nation. From our big cities to our small towns, this billion-dollar industry is here. And unless we move

quickly, it will be here for some time. It is growing, and it must be eradicated.

Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and nonprofit groups such as Alamance for Freedom in my own Sixth Congressional District of North Carolina are on the front lines of this battle, and they are pleading for our help. Here in Congress, we hear your voices. Most importantly, we hear the voices of those trapped in this evil, modern-day slavery.

There is an immediate need for training that will enable officers and agents to identify and rescue victims of human trafficking.

Last week, I introduced my first bill, H.R. 460, the Human Trafficking Detection Act of 2015. This bipartisan legislation works to effectively train and inform the Department of Homeland Security personnel to better detect and intercept human traffickers and their victims.

We took an oath a few weeks ago promising to protect the people of this great country. I am convinced that part of this high calling is to protect those who are victims of human trafficking. Our President even says that the fight against human trafficking is one of the greatest human rights causes of our time, and the United States will continue to lead it. Well, now is the time to lead.

This bill will provide the very necessary training skills in identifying victims of human trafficking as they enter and move about across this country. It is not a final step, but an important one that can immediately save these precious individuals from years of abuse. Let us do so with boldness, courage, and an unflinching dedication to those who need us the most.

Mrs. WAGNER. I thank Congressman WALKER for his leadership, and congratulations on your first piece of legislation—it is so very important—that you will be bringing forward tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a pleasure for me to cosponsor with the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) this Special Order on human trafficking. I look forward tomorrow to a number of bills that are going to pass in this United States House of Representatives. I look forward to speaking tomorrow on the SAVE Act that will go after advertisers of this hideous and heinous crime.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield back the remainder of my time so the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) may speak. She has been a friend and a partner on the issue of human trafficking since her time in Congress. She has been a real partner to me as we moved this legislation forward. We were able to move, as I said, five pieces of legislation last Congress and will be moving 12 tomorrow with her leadership and support on this very, very important issue. She has a wonderful piece of legislation, H.R. 350, the Human Trafficking Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery Act of 2015. I am a proud cosponsor and look forward to its passage tomorrow.

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to condemn the horrific tragedy of human trafficking. Globally, there are 20.9 million people who have been trafficked. Not one U.S. State has been spared—sadly men, women and children in every state have been victimized. This is not just a global problem, it is an American problem and it is right here in our own backyards.

I witnessed this problem first hand while working in Washington State for the King County Sheriffs Office. All too often, I spoke to young girls on the street one day, urging them to get off the streets, and the next they had disappeared. This was allowed to happen for far too long, because for many of us, these girls and even many boys are invisible. We do not want to see the problem and so we too often choose to look the other way and pretend it isn't real—not in our communities.

We have to make the problem—and the solutions—visible. Last year, I introduced and passed legislation which became law that helped—will help—prevent the sex trafficking of youth in foster care. The children in federal and state care are often the most vulnerable to becoming trafficking victims. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited children, as many as 6 in 10 of the young women forced into selling their bodies on the streets are current or former foster children. I was honored to have been able to lead the efforts to change that reality last Congress. I stand today to join my colleagues in continuing to raise awareness and pledge my commitment to keeping up the fight on behalf of our children and working to enact additional legislation to end human trafficking.

This week, we will vote on legislation sponsored by Congresswomen WAGNER, ELLMERS and NOEM, Congressman PAULSEN, JOHNSON and POE and many others which will go a long ways towards preventing the trafficking of countless men, women, boys and girls. This is a fight we must all be in together. We must all join with our colleagues, with law enforcement, and with those who are dedicated to ending human trafficking across the globe to say "no more".

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) will control the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, human trafficking is a real problem, and it is happening right here in America. It is not just happening overseas. And whether you live in a State like mine of South Dakota or in New York City, it is impacting every single State in our country, right in our backyards.

The first step to recovery is admitting you have a problem, and boy, do we have a problem. I am thrilled that we have so many Members here to speak on this important issue, not only the problems we are having, but what we are doing this week to address those here in this country, to give as many tools to our law enforcement officers to make sure that we address the problems we are seeing on our streets every single day and protect as many children and victims as possible.

I would like to yield now to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO). He has been extremely active in the fight to end human trafficking through legislation on Capitol Hill as well as through community engagement at his home in Florida. In his district, Congressman YOHO has brought together representatives from Homeland Security, from local police and sheriff's offices, and State's attorneys for roundtable summits to raise awareness and develop best practices for ending human trafficking in Florida.

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague from the great State of South Dakota.

I rise in solidarity with the growing coalition that is united in the global fight against human trafficking. The numbers are overwhelming. We have all heard the estimates of over 22 million people being trafficked worldwide; sometimes, though, they seem far away. People often say: That kind of stuff doesn't happen here. It happens overseas. It doesn't happen right here.

No, Mr. Speaker, this is happening in our own backyards. There is an estimate of over 1 million teenagers running away every year in the United States. Runaways are most at risk and vulnerable to trafficking. In fact, runaways are typically picked up and pimped out or trafficked within the first 48 hours.

Just 5 days ago in my home State of Florida, a 15-year-old girl was discovered by police in a motel being sexually abused and trafficked several times a day. Her parents had been handing out missing child flyers in the neighborhood. Luckily, someone recognized her picture from an online ad and contacted authorities. That young girl went from being a runaway to a trafficking victim in less than a month.

That precious 15-year-old child could have been anybody's child. It could have been yours or mine. However, it is not just runaways that become victims of trafficking. Traffickers don't discriminate based on economic class, race, gender, or age. Traffickers are motivated by profit, solely profit.

The average cost of a slave worldwide is roughly $90. Human trafficking is a $30-plus billion industry, and it is the second largest source of revenue for terrorists around the world. As the world's fastest growing criminal enterprise, it is shocking how little people know about this horrendous practice. Furthermore, it is appalling how little is put forward in effort to stop it.

This week, the House of Representatives will pass a series of bills designed to streamline law enforcement resources, toughen penalties for offenders, and provide resources to victims. I commend the sponsors of these bills as well as all Members up here today who are willing to stand up and say enough