



Committee on Migration

c/o Migration and Refugee Services, USCCB

3211 Fourth Street NE • Washington DC 20017-1194

202-541-3065 • fax 202-722-8805 • email mrs@usccb.org • www.usccb.org/mrs

February 28, 2020

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, I urge you to consider supporting H.R. 5664, the "Leveraging Information on Foreign Traffickers (LIFT) Act." This bipartisan legislation introduced by Representative McCaul (R-TX) and Representative Engel (D-NY) helps to advance and continue our nation's efforts to address and eradicate human trafficking and assist human trafficking victims.

The Catholic Church teaches that all human life is a gift from God and is sacred. The dignity of the human person must be upheld, and all lives deserve to be protected and nurtured. The Church has a longstanding commitment to ending human trafficking in all its forms, and the restoration of victims. Calling human trafficking "an open wound on the body of contemporary society," and "a crime against humanity," Pope Francis has continued the work of his predecessors and taken global leadership on anti-trafficking initiatives. Here in the United States, we bishops wholeheartedly support the Holy Father and will continue working to eradicate human trafficking and support and uplift survivors.

H.R. 5664 is an important step Congress can take to ensure a robust, global response to human trafficking as it provides adequate time for the completion of the annual TIP (Trafficking in Persons) Report and also puts valuable provisions in place to track individuals who have been denied visas to the United States on human trafficking grounds. Both issues are important in this fight as it is vital to ensure that human trafficking data is clearly collected and disseminated, traffickers do not operate with impunity, and victims are protected.

We are also pleased to see that H.R. 5664 further extends the authorization of the Advisory Council on Human Trafficking. As Pope Francis has stated: "[Trafficking] victims are from all walks of life but are most frequently among the poorest and most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. I believe that these exploited individuals deserve the care and support of our communities and our government and that such support will help them heal and become survivors." Survivors provide a valuable and unique perspective.

We thank Congress for its long-standing commitment to confront modern-day slavery. We ask that you renew your commitment by supporting H.R. 5664 and work to keep this a bipartisan effort. We must continue to come together to fight this crime against humanity and ensure that survivors are given the services and opportunities they need to live with dignity.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend Mario E. Dorsonville
Auxiliary Bishop of Washington
Chairman, Committee on Migration
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops