

January 28, 2008

Dear Senator Feinstein,

The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPA) HR 3887 has just been passed by overwhelming vote in the House and has now been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Since you are a member of that committee, we your California constituents urge you to pass the House bill as it now stands. It is a powerful tool for justice which is supported by a diverse coalition of groups in the United States, all of whom seek to end domestic and international trafficking.

The previous TVPA has not been an effective tool for law enforcement in trafficking prosecutions because its “force, fraud, and coercion” requirement is difficult to prove and is dangerously burdensome for victims, who are not adequately protected from organized criminals and whose families in other countries are often threatened by violent persons. Force, fraud, and coercion should be used for enhanced punishment and should not be the sole basis for convictions.

The House bill would treat domestic and international trafficking as interconnected. The United States government cannot reduce international trafficking without also combating trafficking inside our own borders. The Mann Act can be used for sex trafficking cases. Pimps who are prosecutable under the Mann Act are often traffickers or people who are working within the “distribution network” of sex trafficking. Victims are either brought into the U.S. or transported for sale in prostitution from one state to another. This has been documented in a recent study of prostitution and trafficking in Nevada, in which most women in prostitution had been transported from other states or countries. In this House Bill, we are hoping to use and expand the Mann Act to create a comprehensive legal framework to prosecute sex traffickers. The language of the Mann Act regarding interstate travel should be expanded to include “in or affecting interstate commerce” so that sex trafficking networks at all levels could be more effectively prosecuted.

We also support the House bill’s provision on sex tourism, one aspect of sex trafficking.

Signed,

**1. Amnesty International USA – West**  
Walesa Kanarek

**2. Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition**, San Diego is composed of 125 agencies that work on both sides of the Mexico-United States border to prevent, intervene and eradicate the commercial sexual exploitation of men, women and children.  
Marisa B. Ugarte, Executive Director

**3. Cameron House**, a San Francisco Chinatown-based multi-service agency serving Asian communities since 1874.  
Doreen Der-McLeod, Executive Director

4. **Children's Civil Rights Union**, Los Angeles  
Betsy Salkind, Director
5. **Filipino American Coalition for Environmental Solidarity (FACES)** is an intergenerational organization that works towards transnational environmental justice among communities in the Philippines and the U.S.  
Lizelle Festejo, Board Member
6. **Girl Fest Bay Area**, preventing violence against women and girls through education and art.  
Kathryn Xian
7. **Graduate Asian Pacific Islander Collective**, University of California Berkeley, reconsidering the theoretical foundations of the group of people who have traditionally been described as "Asian Americans"  
Kenzo Sung, Coordinator
8. **Graduate Assembly at University of California, Berkeley**  
Carmen Mitchell, Coordinator
9. **Media Watch**, challenging racism, sexism and violence in the media through education and action.  
Ann Simonton, Coordinator
10. **Missey, Inc.** provides direct services to commercially sexually exploited children and works on the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children throughout the state of California and the nation.  
Nola Brantley, Director
11. **Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social / Women Active in Letters and Social Change**, Berkeley  
Angela Aguilar
12. **Opening Doors**, Sacramento, dedicated to working with refugees, immigrants and underserved people to develop their social and economic skills, wellness, and personal and financial assets to successfully assimilate into society while respecting their cultural identity and individual goals.  
Maurine Huang
13. **Polaris Project Los Angeles**, committed to combating human trafficking and modern-day slavery in Los Angeles and southern California using a comprehensive and community-based approach.
14. **Prostitution Research & Education**, dedicated to the abolition of prostitution and trafficking via education, research, and the arts.  
Melissa Farley, Executive Director

15. **Safe House**, a residential program for women exiting the sex industry.  
Maritza Penagos, Program Director
16. **SAFEHS (Students and Artists Fighting to End Human Slavery)** working to abolish human trafficking/slavery in the Bay Area through the arts, education and community coalitions.  
Annie Fukushima, Director
17. **SAGE** provides trauma and substance abuse services for women and girls recruited into prostitution, victims of international and domestic trafficking, and women and girls with histories of sexual exploitation and violence.  
Norma Hotaling, Executive Director
18. **Salvatorian Anti-Human Trafficking Project**, which coordinates the California Central Coast Coalition Against Human Trafficking.  
S. Jean Schafer SDS
19. **San Francisco Women's Film Festival/Educational Programs**  
Scarlett Shepard, Community Educator and Executive Director
20. Matt Smith, Director, **Social Justice Ministry Santa Clara University**
21. **Soroptimist International of San Francisco**, improving the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world.  
Gail Dekreon, President
22. **STOP the Traffick**, University of California, Berkeley  
Ongoing campaign to raise awareness about international and domestic sex trafficking and to empower people to take action to stop pimping and modern day slavery.
23. **Women's Justice Center**, advocating for victims of rape, domestic violence, and child abuse, particularly in the Latina and other underserved communities of Sonoma County.  
Marie de Santis, Director