

Floor Remarks of Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI), Chairman  
Education and Workforce Committee  
H.R. 4307, *Enhancing Detection of Human Trafficking Act*  
March 3, 2026

(As prepared for delivery)

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4307, the *Enhancing Detection of Human Trafficking Act*. And I would like to thank my friend and colleague, Representative Lucy McBath, for her partnership on this important legislation.

Human trafficking is an evil practice that happens in our backyards. It preys on the vulnerable—runaway youth, migrants, those struggling with poverty, and victims of abuse. This is why we must utilize all resources available to combat this heinous crime. Tragically, human trafficking is not limited to distant places or foreign borders but currently exists in every state in the United States. In fact, the National Human Trafficking Hotline recently reported 340 cases of human trafficking in my home state of Michigan in 2024 alone, involving 585 victims. These numbers are heartbreaking, and they underscore why we must utilize all resources available to combat this heinous crime.

In my time on the Education and Workforce Committee, I have come to the realization that Department of Labor employees have a front-line view to detect patterns of human trafficking and labor exploitation. This reality was heightened in 2023 when the New York Times reported that an estimated 85,000 unaccompanied minors who were encountered

during the Biden-Harris border crisis were released to sponsors who were supposedly “vetted,” only to be forced into illegal work and exploitation. This was a catastrophic failure, which demands immediate and sustained action.

This is where my bill, H.R. 4307, comes into play. Specifically, this legislation directs DOL to educate appropriate staff on how to effectively detect instances of human trafficking, ensure personnel regularly receive information on current trends and best practices, and establish a clear course of action for referring suspected instances of human trafficking to law enforcement. In other words, it turns DOL employees into an early warning system against human trafficking.

One of the greatest obstacles in the fight against human trafficking is a lack of awareness. Too often, visible signs of human trafficking go unnoticed or unreported simply because individuals lack proper training. By arming these employees with critical information on how to identify potential trafficking situations, we can strengthen our ability to intervene quickly and efficiently to hold traffickers accountable and protect those who are most vulnerable.

Importantly, this bill does not create unnecessary bureaucracy. Instead, it strengthens existing structures and ensures that DOL employees are using the best available tools and strategies to catch human traffickers. It supports informed decision-making, improves accountability, and helps direct resources where they are needed most.

H.R. 4307 also sends a message beyond our borders—that the United States is committed to leading the fight against human trafficking through smart policy, strong enforcement, and meaningful coordination.

I’m proud to say that last Congress this legislation passed with overwhelming bipartisan support with a vote of 407 to 0. Protecting more people from falling victim to the scourge of human trafficking is not political.

I urge my colleagues to help put an end to this modern-day slavery, and to vote yes on H.R. 4307.