

U.S. Rep. Steil: Introduces first bill, combats illicit financing of human trafficking crimes

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Contact: Sally Fox
Sally.Fox@mail.house.gov

JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN—Following press conferences in Racine and Janesville, Bryan Steil announced the introduction of his first bill, H.R. 2149, the *Exposing the Financing of Human Trafficking Act*. H.R. 2149 currently has 17 bipartisan cosponsors.

“We cannot turn a blind eye to human trafficking. My bill is a commonsense solution to hold countries accountable. Understanding where this money comes from and where it’s going gives countries the ability to crack down on these crimes. Addressing this gap in current law will have a major impact on global efforts to fight human trafficking,” said Steil.

Congresswoman Madeleine Dean, a Democrat from Pennsylvania, is the Democratic cosponsor of Steil’s bipartisan bill. Cosponsors of H.R. 2149 include Congressman Mark Pocan (WI-02), Congresswoman Gwen Moore (WI-04), Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner (WI-05), Congressman Glenn Grothman (WI-06), Congressman Sean Duffy (WI-07), and Congressman Mike Gallagher (WI-08).

At today’s press conferences, Rock County Sheriff Troy Knudson, Walworth County Sheriff Kurt Picknell, Kenosha County Sheriff David Beth, and Racine County Sheriff Christopher Schmaling gave remarks in support of Steil’s bill. All counties in Wisconsin’s First Congressional District are working to combat human trafficking in

our communities.

On Thursday, Steil will join Waukesha County officials to discuss the bill at the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department.

You can read the bill's text [here](#).

On background on H.R. 2149:

Human trafficking is a horrendous crime that presents a real threat to people all over the world. This crime has become increasingly perpetrated by organized, sophisticated, criminal enterprises and profits from trafficking contribute to the expansion of organized crime and terrorism in the United States and worldwide.

Unfortunately, human trafficking is common because it is profitable. The International Labor Organization estimates that more than \$150 billion in illegal profit is made from forced labor each year, making human trafficking the third most valuable criminal operation in the world.

The U.S. currently uses the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report issued by the Department of State to engage foreign governments to combat human trafficking. The TIP report places countries into one of three tiers based on the extent of their government's efforts to comply with the "minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking." A country's tier designation is then used to condition aid. The TIP report looks at several criteria, but it does not currently cover efforts to disrupt illicit finance.

This bill requires the existing Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report to evaluate foreign countries' efforts to investigate, prevent, and prosecute financial criminal activities associated with the facilitation of human trafficking.