

U.S. Reps. Moore, Taylor: Introduce the Status of Child Marriages in the United States Act

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Congresswoman Moore and Congressman Van Taylor introduced legislation that asks the Secretary of Health and Human Services to find information that will provide extensive data on child marriages. In response, she released the following statement:

“Forced child marriages are occurring across the country. And too often, abuse and sexual violence is inflicted upon children under the veil of marriage.

To address the information gap, my legislation would call for needed comprehensive data on child marriages in the U.S. to understand know which measures would keep children safe,” said **Congresswoman Moore**.

“In 2017, I led an effort to reform Texas child marriage laws to help end forced child marriages. The reform led to an almost 90% reduction in child marriages the year after enactment. However, the grim reality remains, there is no federal law regarding child marriages in the United States,” said **Van Taylor**, lead Republican of the legislation.

“While forced child marriages often lead to chilling and atrocious crimes that rip at the fabric of families and society, our bill, *The Status of Child Marriages in the United States Act*, would study state laws on child marriages to ensure we are doing all we can to protect children and empower them to enter into a marriage only with

their full and free consent.”

“As a leader in the movement to end child marriage in the U.S., the Tahirih Justice Center has been eager for bipartisan federal leadership on this important issue. This bill is a strong step in the right direction – it will fill in critical data gaps which will help us to better understand the problem as well as the impact of progress made thus far. We are excited for the final report which will further drive home the need for all states to undertake strong minimum age of marriage reform to protect children in the U.S. from forced marriage, abuse, and exploitation,” **Casey Carter Swegman, Manager of the Forced Marriage Initiative at the Tahirih Justice Center.**

“I, along with other child marriage survivor advocates across the U.S, am excited to see federal leadership in calling attention to the issue of child marriage as a domestic problem in the United States. We know, through our direct experience, that this abuse increases the likelihood of poverty, limits educational opportunities, and has lifelong mental and physical health impacts on survivors and their children. This bill is a concrete step towards better understanding and breaking cycles of abuse, poverty, and health challenges associated with child marriage,” **Donna Pollard, Child Marriage Survivor Advocate and Founder Survivor’s Corner.**

The Status of Child Marriages in the United States Act is supported by Apna Ghar, Daya Inc., Muslims for Progressive Values, National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV) Peaceful Families Project, Sakhi for South Asian Women, Tahirih Justice Center (Chair), and There Is No Limit Foundation.

Find more information on The Status of Child Marriages in the United States Act [here](#).