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Academy Endorses Global Anti-Human Trafficking Enhancement Act

Washington, D.C. – Trafficking in persons is both a crime and a serious human rights issue which deserves effective law enforcement and suppression. The American Academy of Diplomacy supports the passage of H.R.7089 - Global Anti-Human Trafficking Enhancement Act in the 118th Congress (2023-2024) to authorize Diplomatic Security Agents of the Department of State to investigate trafficking in persons violations domestically and abroad.

The Department of State has a central role to play in US Government efforts to combat trafficking in persons. The Secretary of State is the chair of the President's Interagency Taskforce to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Diplomatic Security Agents, who are Federal Law Enforcement officers and fully trained investigators, are already stationed in 270 overseas locations and 33 offices in the US and can quickly engage trafficking in persons issues around the globe. The administration's 2021 National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking names the Department's Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) alongside FBI, DHS/HSI, and DOL-OIG, as one of four federal investigative agencies with significant human trafficking responsibility as related to investigations and prosecutions. However, Diplomatic Security Agents must rely on legislative authority to conduct passport and visa fraud investigations, often a well-connected nexus to human trafficking activities, to assist and participate in the conduct of these investigations instead of attacking them directly.

H.R.7089, a bipartisan bill, will amend 18 USC Chapter 77 authorities to add Diplomatic Security agents to those who can directly investigate Trafficking in Persons violations domestically and abroad. This is an important step towards increasing effective U.S. investigation and suppression of trafficking in persons crimes. The American Academy of Diplomacy calls for early passage of the bipartisan legislation and hopes to see similar, bipartisan action in the Senate to pass this measure into law.

The American Academy of Diplomacy is a non-partisan and non-governmental organization of former senior diplomats including both career and non-career appointees. It is dedicated to strengthening the professionalism of diplomacy and explaining to the American people the importance of diplomacy.

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