

Senator Patrick Leahy
437 Russell Senate Building
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

March 11, 2015

Dear Senator Leahy,

The Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs wishes to express our ongoing appreciation for your efforts to move the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act. As a longstanding champion of Federal support for efforts to assist vulnerable runaway, homeless & trafficked young people, I know that you must be as frustrated as we are in recent efforts to insert an element of partisanship into what should be a broadly bi-partisan effort to protect victims of human trafficking. The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act and the broader legislation it's amended to should be important opportunities for citizens of the United States and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to unite in morale outrage over the realities of victims of human trafficking.

Difference of opinion and the deliberative role of the Senate is part of what makes our democracy strong, but sometimes unity of purpose should prevail, particularly in efforts involving protections for the most vulnerable among us. There should be no doubt that legislation involving the well-being of individuals who have been victimized by the most base of human behavior should be free of partisan wrangling. It's disappointing and deeply distressing that this isn't always the case.

I write this letter to encourage your efforts to remove partisan language from the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act in an effort to ensure that the Act and the RHY amendment that Senator Collins and you introduced move forward unimpeded.

Again, thank you for your efforts on this issue.

Sincerely,



Kreig Pinkham: Executive Director, Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys & Girls Club
VT Coalition of Runaway & Homeless Youth Programs Board Member