



**Opening Statement of Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), Chairwoman
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Markup of H.R. 6914, the *Pregnant Students' Rights Act*; and H.R. 443,
Enhancing Detection of Human Trafficking Act
January 10, 2024**

(As prepared for delivery)

Welcome to today's markup in which we will be considering two important pieces of legislation.

The first bill, Rep. Ashley Hinson's *Pregnant Students' Rights Act*, is a bill that would require universities to disclose the protections and rights entitled to pregnant students on college campuses.

For pregnant students, the path through college is already a complex one that can be compounded by the responsibility of impending motherhood. Physically and emotionally every decision becomes a little more challenging.

The goal with any decision during this deeply personal and sensitive time should be to maximize the pregnant mothers' educational journey while minimizing harm done to her child's potential future.

As for universities, it is their role to foster an environment of support and understanding, where pregnant students feel safe seeking guidance and assistance. Too often though, counselors fail to provide pregnant students with a complete picture of all the resources available to them.

Therefore, the *Pregnant Students' Rights Act* ensures that universities are not withholding resources and information about carrying the baby to term from pregnant students—such as a students' potential right to modify class schedules for doctor visits. Also, the bill will inform students of their recourse to potential rights violations by filing a Title IX complaint with the Department of Education.

Simply, this bill operates on the assumption that pregnant women, especially those facing the daunting uncertainty of an unexpected college pregnancy, should know all options available to them to help carry the baby to term. For this reason alone, the *Pregnant Students' Rights Act* deserves the Committee's full support.

Next on the agenda is a bipartisan bill sponsored by Reps. Walberg and Sablan titled the *Enhancing Detection of Human Trafficking Act*. This bill would provide additional tools to combat one of the greatest challenges of our time: human trafficking. According to the International Labor Organization, around 27.6 million victims were trafficked on any given day in 2022.

These horrific crimes have been exacerbated due to the open border policies of the Biden administration and the emboldening of the drug cartels, who make millions of dollars trafficking individuals and enslaving innocent boys and girls.

That's why the *Enhancing Detection of Human Trafficking Act* puts the full force of the federal government in action to combat human trafficking, which too often occurs close to home.

This bipartisan bill ensures that Department of Labor enforcement personnel receive the proper education to detect instances of human trafficking so that law enforcement agencies can quickly get involved—and so that justice can be swift.

Members have worked hard to get these two bills before the Committee today and they focus on helping protect vulnerable adults and children in workplaces and in postsecondary education. With that, I thank the sponsors for their hard work and look forward to the passage of these bills.