

New Law Protects Those Who Call Out Corruption

TRAP Act Will Help Prevent Corrupt Governments from Using INTERPOL to Silence Journalists, Whistleblowers, and Anticorruption Activists

A statement from the U.S. office of Transparency International
December 27, 2021

Today, President Biden signed into law the bipartisan Transnational Repression Accountability and Prevention Act, or “TRAP Act,” as part of the annual national defense bill (known as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022).

The TRAP Act will protect the U.S. legal system from the abuse of “red notices” issued by the International Criminal Police Organization (“INTERPOL”), develop a strategy for addressing INTERPOL abuse, and create a public report that names those countries that repeatedly abuse INTERPOL notices for political purposes.

Transparency International’s U.S. Office (TI-US) led a coalition of civil society support for the bill.

Scott Greytak, Director of Advocacy for TI-US, said the following on the passage of the TRAP Act:

There’s nothing that corrupt leaders fear more than free speech. For years, corrupt governments have used INTERPOL’s “red notices” to try to silence and retaliate against those who call out their corruption, including journalists, whistleblowers, and anticorruption activists. International law enforcement must not be used to advantage dictatorship and kleptocracy.

TRAP will help ensure that the world’s law enforcement network can no longer be used to silence corruption’s critics, by injecting into INTERPOL much-needed due process, transparency, and rule-of-law practices. Perhaps most importantly, TRAP codifies into U.S. law that the United States may not extradite the subject of a red notice based solely on an INTERPOL red notice. This will ensure that American law

enforcement is not conscripted into corruption and doing the dirty work of dictators.

We thank Senators Wicker and Cardin, Representatives Wilson and Cohen, the Helsinki Commission, and the Caucus against Foreign Corruption and Kleptocracy for their leadership on this critical issue.

Transparency International is the world's largest coalition against corruption. We give voices to victims and witnesses of corruption, and work with governments, businesses, and citizens to stop the abuse of entrusted power. In collaboration with national chapters in more than 100 countries, we are leading the fight to turn our vision of a world free from corruption into reality.

Related Resources

- Read the [text](#) of the TRAP Act;
- Read a [letter of support](#) for the TRAP Act and other anticorruption measures signed by over 30 organizations and prominent individuals;
- Read the Administration's [United States Strategy on Countering Corruption](#);
- Read Transparency International's policy plan for fighting foreign corruption [Combating Global Corruption: A Bipartisan Plan](#).

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