

## Why Victims of This Crime

In general, the people referred to in this bill (generally women and children) are victims of bigamy, which is a felony, and is often a physically and emotionally harmful situation to which these people were subjected through no fault of their own. Most were born or coerced into these situations.

When fleeing these situations, they often leave everything they know behind, and generally have zero family support. Virtually all of their resources are left behind. The data provided to me from HOLDING OUT HELP, an organization that helps women, children, and men trying to free themselves from such situations is staggering. Of those who have come to Holding Out Help:

- 89% have no assets. To escape they have left everything behind.
- 92% are victims of some kind of abuse  
(75% are victims of sexual abuse)
- Most have a 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade educational level
- 99% suffer from PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)

The purpose of this bill is to provide help for people who feel trapped in this illegal situation and want to be free.