

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3313

To establish a Federal Polygamy Task Force, to authorize assistance for victims of polygamy, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 23, 2008

Mr. REID introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To establish a Federal Polygamy Task Force, to authorize assistance for victims of polygamy, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Victims of Polygamy
5 Assistance Act of 2008”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Despite the fact that polygamy has been il-
9 legal in the United States for over 100 years, the
10 practice of polygamy involving underage marriages is

1 growing. Sizable polygamist communities exist in Ar-
2 izona, Utah, and Nevada, and are expanding into
3 other States.

4 (2) Polygamist communities are typically con-
5 trolled by organizations that engage in widespread
6 and systematic violations of State laws and the laws
7 of the United States in order to enrich their leaders
8 and maintain control over their members.

9 (3) The crimes perpetrated by these organiza-
10 tions include child abuse, domestic violence, welfare
11 fraud, tax evasion, public corruption, witness tam-
12 pering, and transporting victims across State lines.

13 (4) Due to the systematic and sophisticated na-
14 ture of these crimes, State and local law enforce-
15 ment agencies would benefit from the assistance of
16 the Federal Government as they investigate and
17 prosecute these organizations and their leaders for
18 violations of State law. In addition, violations of
19 Federal law associated with polygamy should be in-
20 vestigated and prosecuted directly by Federal au-
21 thorities.

22 (5) The work of State and Federal law enforce-
23 ment agencies to combat crimes by polygamist orga-
24 nizations would benefit from enhanced collaboration
25 and information-sharing among such agencies.

1 (6) The establishment of a task force within the
2 Department of Justice to coordinate Federal efforts
3 and collaborate with State agencies would aid in the
4 investigation and prosecution of criminal activities of
5 polygamist organizations in both Federal and State
6 courts.

7 (7) Polygamist organizations isolate, control,
8 manipulate, and threaten victims with retribution
9 should they ever abandon the organization. Individ-
10 uals who choose to testify against polygamist organi-
11 zations in Federal or State court have unique needs,
12 including social services and witness protection sup-
13 port, that warrant Federal assistance.

14 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF A FEDERAL POLYGAMY TASK**
15 **FORCE.**

16 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within
17 the Department of Justice a Federal Polygamy Task
18 Force, which shall consist of the Deputy Attorney General,
19 the United States attorneys from affected Federal judicial
20 districts, representatives of the Federal Bureau of Inves-
21 tigation, the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of
22 Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Serv-
23 ices, and any officer of the Federal Government whom the
24 Deputy Attorney General considers necessary to strength-
25 en Federal law enforcement activities and provide State

1 and local law enforcement officials the assistance they
2 need to address the illegal activity of one or more polyg-
3 amist organizations.

4 (b) PURPOSES.—The Federal Polygamy Task Force
5 established under subsection (a) shall—

6 (1) formulate effective responses to the unique
7 set of crimes committed by polygamist organizations;

8 (2) establish partnerships with State and local
9 law enforcement agencies to share relevant informa-
10 tion and strengthen State and Federal efforts to
11 combat crimes perpetrated by polygamist organiza-
12 tions;

13 (3) assist States by providing strategies and
14 support for the protection of witnesses;

15 (4) track the criminal behavior of polygamist
16 organizations that cross State and international bor-
17 ders; and

18 (5) ensure that local officials charged with pro-
19 tecting the public are not corrupted because of fi-
20 nancial, family, or membership ties to a polygamist
21 organization.

1 **SEC. 4. POLYGAMY VICTIM ASSISTANCE DISCRETIONARY**
2 **GRANTS.**

3 The Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10601
4 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1404E the
5 following:

6 **“SEC. 1404F. ASSISTANCE FOR VICTIMS OF POLYGAMY.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director may make grants
8 as provided in section 1404(c)(1)(A) to State, tribal, and
9 local prosecutors’ offices, law enforcement agencies,
10 courts, jails, and correctional institutions, and to qualified
11 public and private entities, to develop, establish, and main-
12 tain programs for the enforcement of rights and provision
13 of social services (including witness protection, housing,
14 education, vocational training, mental health services,
15 child care, and medical treatment) for an individual who
16 is exploited or otherwise victimized by practitioners of po-
17 lygamy.

18 “(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In ad-
19 dition to funds made available under section 1402(d),
20 there are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this
21 section—

22 “(1) \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2009; and

23 “(2) \$2,500,000 for each of the fiscal years
24 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

25 “(c) FALSE CLAIMS ACT.—Notwithstanding any
26 other provision of law, amounts collected pursuant to sec-

1 tions 3729 through 3731 of title 31, United States Code
2 (commonly known as the ‘False Claims Act’), may be used
3 for grants under this section, subject to appropriation.”.

4 **SEC. 5. POLYGAMY INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION AS-**
5 **SISTANCE DISCRETIONARY GRANTS.**

6 Section 506(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and
7 Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3756(a)) is amend-
8 ed—

9 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the
10 end;

11 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at
12 the end and inserting “; and”; and

13 (3) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(3) \$2,000,000, to be granted by the Attorney
15 General to States and units of local government to
16 investigate and prosecute polygamist organizations
17 that violate Federal, State, or local laws.”.

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