

LEGALS

Houchin, Trahan, Valadao, Pocan introduce bipartisan Campus Lifeline Act

This week, Congresswoman Erin Houchin (IN-09) introduced the Campus Lifeline Act of 2026 alongside Representatives Lori Trahan (D-MA), David Valadao (R-CA), and Mark Pocan (D-WI). This bipartisan legislation aims to expand awareness and access to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for students and young adults.

The Campus Lifeline Act clarifies that the 988 Lifeline can be printed on driver's licenses and student identification cards, helping ensure young people have immediate access to critical resources. The bill also strengthens campus mental health efforts by allowing Garrett Lee Smith grants to support student-led early intervention and outreach.

In 2023, 40 percent of high school students reported feeling persistently sad or hopeless, and nearly one in ten attempted suicide, yet awareness of the 988 Lifeline remains low among young adults. Indiana has led on this issue by requiring 988 on student IDs, and the Campus Lifeline Act builds on those efforts by expanding access nationwide.

"We have a responsibility to make sure young people know when to turn in a moment of crisis," said Rep. Houchin. "During Youth Mental Health Awareness Week, I'm proud to introduce the Campus Lifeline Act to expand access to the 988 Lifeline and strengthen support on campuses. This bill promotes early intervention, student engagement, and life-saving mental health resources. It's our goal to make sure every young person knows help is available."

"Every young person deserves access to compassionate, lifesaving mental health care when they need it most," said Rep. Trahan. "I was proud to lead the Garrett Lee Smith Reauthorization Act to strengthen and expand suicide prevention programs for young people, and this bipartisan legislation builds on that work by increasing awareness of and access to these vital services. By leveraging the reach of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, we can connect more teens and young adults with the support they need, ensure they know help is available, and reach more young people before a crisis becomes a tragedy."

"Young adults are facing a growing mental health crisis, but too many still don't know where to turn for help," said Rep. Valadao. "While California law requires the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline be printed on student ID cards, access to this lifesaving resource shouldn't depend on your zip code. By expanding existing Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Memorial Grants and ensuring 988 is added to new IDs nationwide, we can raise awareness for mental health care, connect more people to support, and help prevent tragedies before they happen."

"The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline has saved lives. There's no question about it," said Rep. Pocan. "The more awareness we can raise about 988, especially among our young people, the better. I'm glad to help lead this effort with Reps. Houchin, Trahan, and Valadao."

Awareness and education around mental health resources are vital, and when young people lead, they help create solutions that are practical and accessible.

This bill has been referred to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, on which Rep. Houchin serves.

address, and telephone number of individuals with authority to negotiate and bind the proposer contractually, and who may be contacted during the period of evaluation.

Award of Contract

Evaluation criteria should include:

1. Specialized experience or technical expertise of the organization and its personnel in connection with the scope of services to be provided and the complexity of the project (10 pts).
2. Previous record of performance on contracts, including quality of work, timeliness, and cost control (10 pts).
3. Capacity of the organization to perform the work within time limitations, taking into consideration the current planned workload of the firm (10 pts).
4. Familiarity of the organization with this type of project or problems applicable to the project (10 pts).

If you are interested in providing the services required, please submit three (3) copies of the Statement of Qualifications to the Town of Versailles, PO Box 436, 128 North Main Street, Versailles, IN 47042, no later than 4:00 p.m. local time on June 19th, 2026. Each Statement of Qualifications will be reviewed for completeness and clarity according to the above criteria.

The Town of Versailles may or may not negotiate the fee schedule with one or more offerors. They reserve the right to reject any and/or all responses. The Town of Versailles is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Offerors may desire additional information, a site visit, or clarification regarding the Statement of Qualifications. If so, please contact Holly Wehr, Director of Community Development, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. local time at holly@townofversailles.com.

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REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Versailles Wastewater Utility Improvement Project

To assure compliance with federal funding spending sources/ agencies and related requirements regarding the competitive negotiation of professional engineering services, the Town of Versailles is seeking Statements of Qualifications for the provision of the design services described in the scope of work below relating to the wastewater project located within the incorporated limits of Versailles, IN.

Description of Services Needed/ Scope of Work

1. Review all available information, surveys, and develop a comprehensive project scope that addresses sanitary sewer rehabilitation, improvements for two existing lift stations, replacement of one lift station, and rehabilitation and expansion of the wastewater treatment facility.
2. Refine the design to comply with local, state, and federal regulations, and coordinate with federal agencies to ensure the design meets recommended standards.
3. Collaborate with the Town of Versailles to prepare all necessary tasks and documentation for submission for federal funding for the project.
4. Develop preliminary cost estimates for the project.
5. Support the project owner in preparing and delivering public hearing presentations as required.
6. If federal funding is awarded, provide services to finalize the construction design, prepare bid documents, oversee the bidding process, and manage construction oversight and inspection.

Type of Contract
The Town of Versailles will execute either a firm-fixed-price contract or a cost-reimbursement contract for these services, contingent on

the final commitment of grant funding.

Federal Requirements

Prospective offerors should note the successful proposer must meet the following terms and conditions:

1. 24 CFR Part 85.36.
2. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
3. Conflict of Interest (24 CFR Part 570).
4. Access to records.
5. Executive Order 11246 - Equal Employment Opportunity
6. Executive Order 12138 - Women Business Enterprise Policy.
7. Architectural Barrier Act of 1968.
8. Age Discrimination Act of 1975.
9. Section 3 Clause - Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968.
10. Section 504 - Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
11. Retention and Custodial Requirements (24 CFR Part 85.42).
12. Executive Order 11063.
13. Affirmative Action Program / Plan.
14. Davis-Bacon and Related Acts.

Rate of Qualifications

The proposal must include sufficient information regarding qualifications and determine whether the respondent is qualified and has relevant experience. Please note that a proposed fee should not be included, as this is a qualification-based selection process. The statement of qualifications should include the following:

1. A description of expertise, experience, and resources directly relevant and available for the proposed project.
2. A list of similar projects previously completed.
3. A list of references.
4. Resumes of professional staff members who will work on this project.
5. Name of the person to be in charge of the project.
6. Description of scope of services as per "Description of Services Needed."
7. A project timeline.

The statement of qualifications shall also provide the following information: name, title,

reject at its option any advertisement deemed detrimental to the public interest or the policy of the newspapers. **All real estate advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination. We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.**

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Southeastern Career Center

is now accepting applications for the 2026-2027 school year for the following **certified teaching positions:**

- Heavy Equipment Instructor
- Welding I Instructor

Qualified candidates must submit a completed certified application, credentials, transcripts, three letters of recommendation, and a resumé.

Applications are available online at: <https://www.sccusa.org/page/employment>.

Completed application materials should be submitted to **Ashley Powers** at arpowers@sccusa.org.

For questions, please call **812-689-5253 ext. 222**.

Slavery in the Colonies and the States Prior to the Civil War

Robert Luken
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In the previous article I discussed the institution of slavery as it existed in other countries. In this article my focus is upon slavery in the colonies and later within the states following the American Revolution.

As Americans living in the 21st century, I think that it is unfathomable to envision that we could be owned by another. Even more horrific, if that is possible, for the enslaved individual, was knowing that ones loved ones: parents, spouse and children were the property of the slave holder and therefore could also be sold.

However, this is exactly what took place in the colonies and after the colonies won their independence from Great Britain and became The United States of America.

The history of slavery in North American but specifically in The United States of America goes back centuries.

Many historians cite the beginning of slavery in America to have begun in the year 1619 when the privateer ship, ironically called "The White Lion" brought 20 enslaved Africans to the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia. The Africans were seized from a Portuguese slave ship.

During the 17th century the European settlers in the colonies used enslaved Africans as "a cheaper and plentiful labor source than Indigenous populations and indentured servants."

The exact number of slaves who were transported to the colonies is difficult to

determine. However, it is estimated that nearly 12.5 million enslaved Africans were transported to the Americas during this time period. During the 18th century it is estimated that 6.5 million enslaved Africans were transported.

The horrors of being an enslaved human being began immediately upon being seized by the slave traders. Upon capture, the slaves were chained and were often branded with hot irons signifying which European company or trader held claim to the slave.

Upon reaching the African coast, the slaves, regardless of gender or age were stripped naked, chained and then packed into the hulls of ships that would eventually bring them to the North American continent.

The conditions in the hulls of the ships were nightmarish. To maximize profits, the slaves were packed so tightly together that often they could not sit up. The air was described as "putrid" as the hold was filthy with human waste, vomit and blood and the temperatures were noted to be "stiffing."

Dysentery was common as were the diseases of smallpox, measles, and scurvy, which was caused by a lack of vitamin C. Starvation, from inadequate nutritional food was prevalent.

With such cramped and disease ridden conditions, it is not surprising that 15-20 percent of the slaves died during the passage to North America. This was only the beginning of the horrific conditions which the slave would experience.

Upon arrival the enslaved Africans

were subjected to more humiliation and abuse when they and their family members were sold at the slave markets.

The largest slave market was in New Orleans. Other cities with "human auction markets" were Richmond, Montgomery, Savannah,

Charleston and Mobile, to name a few.

Prior to being auctioned their bodies were washed, shaved and oiled to hide the wounds that they had endured from their captives. At the slave market they were subjected to "invasive" examinations of their teeth, muscles and in some cases genital areas. - much like livestock inspections.

My ending quote is from Solomon Northrup who spent twelve years enslaved on a Louisiana plantation. The quote and included information for this article is from his memoir Twelve Years a Slave.

"The men were arranged on one side of the room, the women on the other... Freeman [the trader]... would make us hold up our heads, walk briskly back and forth, while customers would feel of our hands and arms and bodies, turn us about, ask us what we could do, make us open our mouths and show our teeth, precisely as a jockey examines a horse which he is about to barter for or purchase."

In my next article I will focus upon the situation that the enslaved Africans faced after being sold.



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