



## HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

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March 20, 2025

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair  
Environment and Transportation Committee  
251 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT:** SB 7- Department of Transportation - Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response (See Someone, Save Someone Act)

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I commend Senator Jackson for his advocacy and introduction of Senate Bill 7. This bill would require the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop and implement a training program on the identification and reporting of suspected human trafficking victims.

Like all jurisdictions in Maryland, Howard County has seen the impact of human trafficking in our community. From October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2024, our Office of Human Trafficking Prevention (OHTP) has identified and served a total of 107 victims of sex and labor trafficking.

We will continue to meet trafficking victims with comprehensive services and a seamless, coordinated support system. Through our agencies and community partners, we help victims through trauma-informed counseling and legal services while also connecting them with health care, safe housing, and safety planning resources. In 2024 alone, our Howard County Police Department recovered 22 victims from sex trafficking operations, some of which were juveniles.

We understand that Howard County is not immune to this issue. Which is why in my first year as County Executive, we introduced legislation that permanently established the Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordination Council (HTPCC). Both HTPCC and OHTP's work align with the mission and vision of the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force and other stakeholders working to prevent and ultimately eliminate human trafficking in any form.

Since their conception, OHTP and HTPCC have prioritized educational presentations to local community groups with introductory sessions on sex and labor trafficking and available local resources. This outreach focuses on groups most at risk for trafficking, including H2A and H2B visa holders.

These teams also hold confidential quarterly case review meetings to review adult sex and any labor trafficking cases as well as credible tips. Moving forward OHTP and HTPCC will continue to expend partnerships with county agencies, immigrant-focused groups and service organizations, key faith and community organizers and groups, businesses, and business organizations to ensure that members of our community are aware of their rights and available resources.



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The passage of Senate Bill 7 would exponentially expand the number of trained individuals with the skills to identify potential trafficking victims. Furthermore, by prioritizing training for employees in transit stations, airports, ports, and rest stops, this bill ensures these skills flow to employees in some of the most high-risk areas for trafficking.

It is critical that we take the action's necessary to combat human trafficking, and this bill is a bold step towards protecting victims and winning the fight. I welcome your support and respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 7.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive