



February 23, 2026

Dear Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the House Health Committee:

As a grassroots organization of Maryland social workers, we respectfully request a **favorable** report on **HB 771**.

Human trafficking impacts Maryland's most vulnerable individuals and communities. It is vital that we expand upon existing rigorous and accessible educational opportunities for Maryland social workers to identify the signs of human trafficking and learn best practice around offering culturally competent, trauma-informed care.

**HB 771 offers a very practical solution.** Maryland social workers already have a requirement to complete 30 - 40 hours of continuing education every two years to maintain licensure at the bachelors (LBSW), masters (LMSW), and clinical level (LCSW-C). *Maryland's Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking 2025 Report* shows that statewide training has been effective in "strengthening victim service delivery" and "emphasizing relationship building, survivor empowerment, and harm reduction." The report also highlights the number of human trafficking victims served in Maryland last year:

- 1,075 human trafficking victims
- 428 new human trafficking victims
- 2,417 unique primary crime victims.
- 285 unique secondary crime victims served
- 2,568 victims received ongoing services through the RNPG program only
- 4,941 victims received ongoing services through all funding sources

Human trafficking is prevalent in Maryland. We have existing regional networks of partner organizations to implement this vital training. We respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 771. Thank you for your continued commitment to supporting Maryland's most vulnerable through strengthening Maryland Social Work.

Sincerely,

SWEAR (Social Workers for Equity & Anti-Racism)

To view the referenced report, please visit:  
<https://gocpp.maryland.gov/reports-and-publications/>.