

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 7

E1, E4

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By: **Senator Simonaire**

Introduced and read first time: January 31, 2014

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Human Trafficking**

3 FOR the purpose of formally requesting the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force
4 to perform a certain study and provide a certain recommendation by a certain
5 date; providing for the distribution of copies of this Resolution; and generally
6 relating to human trafficking.

7 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland affirms a commitment to respecting the
8 dignity and internationally recognized right of all people to live a life free from
9 violence and coercion; and

10 WHEREAS, Human trafficking is an intolerable and gross violation of human
11 rights; and

12 WHEREAS, Human trafficking is a criminal activity in which human beings are
13 treated as possessions to be controlled and exploited through the use of force, threats
14 of force, deception, or coercion for the purpose of involuntary subjection to commercial
15 sex acts, forced labor, bonded labor, and other forms of servitude; and

16 WHEREAS, The form of slavery known as human trafficking knows no borders
17 and preys on victims of any age, race, gender, or nationality; and

18 WHEREAS, Human trafficking preys on the poor and most vulnerable members
19 of a society who are disproportionately affected by poverty, race, gender inequities,
20 inadequate education, and a lack of economically viable employment, thereby fueling
21 human trafficking; and

22 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland recognizes that certain groups are
23 particularly vulnerable to the crime of human trafficking in the United States and
24 Maryland, especially women and young children, the overwhelming majority of whom
25 are younger than 24 years old; and



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1 WHEREAS, Approximately 1.2 million children are trafficked every year, with
2 two children sold into slavery every minute, and an estimated 100,000 bought and sold
3 in the United States alone; and

4 WHEREAS, The irresponsible and highly profitable sexualization of children
5 through various media is promulgated in cultures around the world, thus normalizing
6 the sexual objectification of youth and perpetuating demand for sexual contact with
7 underage victims; and

8 WHEREAS, The vast majority of state human trafficking laws do not provide
9 comprehensive protective responses for exploited youth, victim assistance, remedies,
10 or protection from arrest based on offenses committed as a result of being victimized;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland affirms the important work of persons in
13 law enforcement, education, medicine, counseling, and other professions who address
14 human trafficking through their assigned responsibilities; and

15 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland affirms the unique vulnerability of minors
16 to the crime of human trafficking and the importance of working to restore minors who
17 have been victimized and condemned to the heartbreaking and humiliating life of
18 human trafficking; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
20 General Assembly formally requests the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force to
21 perform a comprehensive study of the various approaches other states have
22 implemented while decriminalizing the act of prostitution by minors caught in human
23 trafficking as defined in federal law and providing a complementary restorative
24 program to facilitate the successful reintroduction of those minors back into society;
25 and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly formally requests the Maryland
27 Human Trafficking Task Force to provide a detailed recommendation of best possible
28 approaches and programs based on the results of their study to the Governor and, in
29 accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the Senate Judicial
30 Proceedings Committee and the House Judiciary Committee on or before December 31,
31 2014; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
33 Legislative Services to the Honorable Martin O'Malley, Governor of Maryland; the
34 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and the
35 Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates.