



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES
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Delegate Dereck E. Davis, Chairman
House Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 231
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony IN SUPPORT of HB 382: Business Records – Innkeepers - Records and Human Trafficking Awareness Training

Dear Chair Davis,

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice-Chair and members of the committee, my name is Andrea Nunez. I am the Manager of Office of Human Trafficking Prevention from the Department of Community Resources and Services in Howard County and very glad to be here in support of this bill on behalf of Howard County Executive, Dr. Calvin Ball.

County Executive Ball would like to thank Delegate Ebersole for his strong leadership on this bill and for being a steady champion of wise awareness initiatives to prevent human trafficking in Maryland.

Whether it may come as a surprise to you or not, people are bought and sold across Maryland. It is well-established that hotels are a hotspot for sex trafficking. Hotels and motels at all price points are used, it is not limited to lower priced establishments. Although backpage is no longer around, several other websites have taken its place where advertisements for sex are continually posted, leading to communication with the interested buyer to arrange a meeting to engage in sex acts for money. The location is quite often a hotel room.

Howard County Police investigate sex trafficking cases at different hotels throughout the County and have been for years. Just last week, our State's Attorney won a guilty verdict against a trafficker who was trafficking multiple adult female victims from a hotel in Elkridge. Earlier this month Howard County Police arrested nine adult men attempting to buy sex at a different hotel in Jessup. Less frequently detected, nationwide, there have been cases of labor trafficking of hotel employees and contractors.

Housekeeping, front desk, security, maintenance and food service staff are all well-positioned to observe signs of trafficking occurring in hotel rooms or labor trafficking of other workers. In addition to hotel management, all workers should be uniformly taught about what trafficking is, what the red flags are, and how to safely react and report.

The Department of Community Resources and Services provides vital human services through its offices of ADA Coordination, Aging and Independence, Children and Families, Community Partnerships, Consumer Protection, Human Trafficking Prevention, Local Children's Board, and Veterans and Military Families.

Howard County Government, Calvin Ball County Executive

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