



BILL NUMBER: House Bill 245

TITLE: Program for Preventing HIV Infection for Rape Victims – Alterations and Repeal of Sunset

COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations

HEARING DATE: February 9, 2022

POSITION: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force (MDHTTF) and its members respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 245.

MDHTTF supports efforts to dismantle human trafficking by strengthening laws prosecuting traffickers, providing services and rehabilitation to victims, and increasing awareness of the issue. House Bill 245 repeals the sunset on the Program for Preventing HIV Infection for Rape Victims and established it permanently. Victims and survivors of human trafficking are in highly vulnerable situations where they are at increased risk of HIV infection and are also often the victims of sexual and physical abuse including rape.

By permanently establishing the Program for Preventing HIV Infection for Rape Victims we will ensure that upon the request of a rape victim, and with a prescription from their medical provider, the state will pay for the full course of HIV prevention treatment known as non-occupational post exposure prophylaxis (nPEP). The permanent program also provides coverage of necessary, and critical, follow-up care for patients taking nPEP.

A permanent program to prevent HIV infection for rape survivors not only offers survivors peace of mind but also demonstrates that the state of Maryland supports and protects the lives of rape survivors which include survivors of trafficking and maintains that HIV prevention is a public health priority.

For more information, please contact Amanda Rodriguez at arodriguez@turnaroundinc.org or Melanie Shapiro at mshapiro@mnadv.org, co-chairs of the Legislative Committee of the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force.

About MDHTTF: Formed in 2007 by the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Attorney General of Maryland, and the State’s Attorney for Baltimore City, MDHTTF serves as the lead investigative, prosecutorial, and victim services coordinating body for anti-human trafficking activity in the State of Maryland. MDHTTF has grown to include most law enforcement agencies in the State, all child-serving state agencies, the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Homeland Security Investigations, most local State’s Attorney’s Offices, and dozens of victim service agencies. MDHTTF is comprised of five committees – legislative, law enforcement, victim services, public awareness, and training. During this time, MDHTTF has grown a robust understanding of the issue of human trafficking in Maryland.