



EASTERN SHORE HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

Moving forward to combat this evil together

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
Room 101 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 15, 2022

Dear Chairman Clippinger,

House Bill 833 - Criminal Law - Victims of Child Sex Trafficking - Safe Harbor and Service Response

Child sex trafficking victims deserve a way out of the juvenile legal system when charged with prostitution and other related crimes. Therefore, the Eastern Shore Human Trafficking Task Force supports HB 833 as it will protect, rather than criminalizes, children who are victims of human trafficking, and provide them with the specialized services they require.

Human trafficking is the second highest grossing criminal enterprise. For the pimps and traffickers, it is high profit and low risk. For the victims and their families, it is a far-reaching tragedy and a long road to recovery for the survivors. There have been several cases on the eastern shore where minors have been trafficking victims subjected to unspeakable acts. They need a Safe Harbor to protect and assist them, HB 833 will go a long way in meeting this need throughout Maryland.

For these reasons and to improve Maryland's child sex trafficking laws which were recently been given an F, the lowest possible grade, by Shared Hope International the Eastern Shore Human Trafficking Task Force urges the Committee to give HB 833 a favorable report.

Yours Truly

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edwin Thomas".

Edwin Thomas, Co-Chair
1562 Efford Road
Pasadena, MD 21122

***The MISSION of the Eastern Shore Human Trafficking Task Force is to:
Combat human trafficking (sex and labor exploitation) by encouraging, supporting and promoting
awareness, prevention and education throughout the Eastern Shore.***