Maryland Catholic Conference_FAV_SB203.pdf

Uploaded by: Brian Barnwell

Position: FAV

February 8, 2023

SB 203
Maryland Department of Transportation – Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Position: Favorable

The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 203 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop and implement a training program for certain transportation-sector employees on the identification and reporting of suspected child exploitation and human trafficking. The bill requires specific employees to complete the training program, and employers to certify this completion. The bill also requires pertinent employers, in consultation with the Department, to establish a procedure for reporting suspected incidents of child exploitation or human trafficking to appropriate staff, law enforcement, or the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline. Employers shall implement a child exploitation and human trafficking prevention policy for employees. The bill also calls for the Department to develop signage and require placement at certain locations to help provide information and resources for child exploitation and human trafficking victims. The legislation also requires frequent public service announcements in both English and Spanish at Transit Stations, Airports, Port Facilities, and Highway Rest Stops.

The Maryland Catholic Conference supports this bill because it educates those working in the transportation sector on trafficking and aids law enforcement in their efforts to identify and end human trafficking. It will also help the public become more aware of how they can help fight against trafficking. It will also help victims learn how they can report trafficking. Horribly, Maryland's central location has facilitated its development as both a pass-through state and a destination for human traffickers. Traffickers utilize many of Maryland's highways, especially Interstate-95 to connect victims to major east coast cities such as New York, Baltimore,

Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. The Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force has identified incidents of sex trafficking at Maryland truck stops, and data from the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) suggests that approximately 70 percent of human trafficking incidents occur in our nation's truck stops. Victims and traffickers have told law enforcement that Maryland is a "goldmine" for human trafficking.[1]

Pope Francis frequently condemns the horror of trafficking in persons, declaring, "Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ." [2]

This bill will go a long way in helping fight against child exploitation and human trafficking. For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **SB 203**. Thank you for your consideration.

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[1] http://www.mdhumantrafficking.org/maryland

[2] https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/april/documents/papa-francesco_20140410_tratta-persone-umane.html

SB 203 - Maryland Department of Transportation - C

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV

**SB 203 - Maryland Department of Transportation - Child Exploitation and
Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
February 8, 2023**

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 203. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

We support SB 203's goal to better identify human trafficking and child exploitation as part of Maryland's campaign to stop human trafficking. We support these mandatory trainings and think it is important to have many of Maryland's frontline employees, like our transit workers, able to spot potential human trafficking and child exploitation cases. Human trafficking is a major issue in Maryland. The National Human Trafficking Resource Center found 187 cases reported in Maryland in 2019. These numbers dramatically undercount the extent of the problem as very few cases actually get reported and investigated. SB 203 aims to fix that. Maryland's unique location along the east coast, with an international airport, multiple rail connections, intercity bus offerings, and several important interstate highways, means that human traffickers have many different opportunities to hurt people in our state.

We do want to flag SB 203 as having some unresolved impacts on the state's contracted workers. The bill currently has no language clarifying who pays for the training time required for workers if they are employed by an outside contractor. The Fiscal and Policy Note estimates how much it might cost for state employees, but does not weigh in on how much it might cost the state's contractors. MDOT has many contractors, including those that employ frontline workers like commuter bus drivers or MARC engineers. Without a collective bargaining agreement that specifies that all work training has to occur at the company's expense, there is no guarantee that these workers will be compensated for their time when receiving the trainings. Workers deserve to be paid for necessary trainings like this, even if they are not directly employed by the state.

We encourage the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 203 but need better clarity on how the bill will impacted contracted workers.

2023-02-08 SB 203 (Support).pdf
Uploaded by: Hannibal Kemerer
Position: FAV

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February 8, 2023

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.
            Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer
            Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: SB0203 – Maryland Department of Transportation – Child Exploitation and
            Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response (Support in
            Concept)

The Office of Attorney General supports the intent of Senate Bill 203, Senator Jackson's legislation to raise awareness of child exploitation and human trafficking amongst transportation-sector employees and contractors. According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, "[s]ex trafficking occurs at truck stops in the United States often in to forms, through commercial sex and through fake massage businesses."[1] Similarly, according to the American Association of Airport Executives, "[t]he first step in combating human trafficking is learning to spot warning signs, and travel industry employees should participate in training seminars that are tailored to them. Airport, airline and security personnel who have completed human trafficking awareness training are a vital first line of defense in the effort to prevent this crime."[2]

If the Maryland Department of Transportation is provided the necessary resources to develop and disseminate this training, it will greatly heighten awareness and, through associated reporting, improve public safety. For the foregoing reason, we urge the Committee to favorably report SB 203.

cc: Committee Members

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[1] National Human Trafficking Hotline: Truck Stop-Based, available online at:
https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/sb0203 (last visited Feb. 7, 2023).
[2] American Association of Airport Executives: Human Trafficking Research, available online at:
https://aaae.org/humantrafficking (last visited Feb. 7, 2023).
This bill letter is a statement of the Office of Attorney General's policy position on the referenced pending legislation. For a legal or constitutional analysis of the bill, Members of the House and Senate should consult with the Counsel to the General Assembly, Sandy Brantley. She can be reached at 410-946-5600 or sbrantley@oag.state.md.us

Trafficking - truckers - testimony - senate - 2023

Uploaded by: Lisae C Jordan

Position: FAV

Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 203
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
February 8, 2023

The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the CAAST project – the Coordinated Action Against Sex Trafficking. CAAST is a statewide project to develop services for survivors of sex trafficking. It includes a network of rape crisis centers, the Sexual Assault Legal Institute, and other service providers striving to create comprehensive services for sex trafficking survivors across the State of Maryland. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 203.

Senate Bill 203 – Department of Transportation
Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Prevention
Senate Bill 203 requires the Department of Transportation to develop and implement a training program for transportation–sector employees on the identification and reporting of suspected child exploitation and human trafficking victims. Truck stops can provide child runaways and others at risk of trafficking with convenient stops, and also provide a place slightly secluded from public view. Truck stops can also provide opportunities to pick up, drop off, or stop for paid sex with children. These victims even have a name, and are referred to as "Lot Lizards" in the trucking community. Though most of the trucking industry is not involved in the sex trade, there unfortunately are consumers that fuel the trafficking. It has been reported that buyers use indicators such as stickers, flashing headlights, and code words such as "commercial" to indicate their interest. Massage parlors located at truck stops have also been knowns to be covers for sex trafficking businesses. This bill responds to these practices and will help educate those working in the transit business to identify and prevent child exploitation and human trafficking.
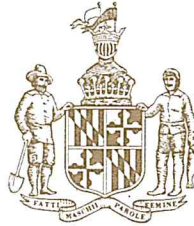
The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 203

SB203JacksonTestimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Michael Jackson
Position: FAV

MICHAEL A. JACKSON
Legislative District 27
Calvert, Charles and
Prince George's Counties

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Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Pensions

Public Safety, Transportation, and
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND

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TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 203

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – CHILD EXPLOITATION AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS, TRAINING, AND RESPONSE

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 8, 2023

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 203 is a straight-forward piece of legislation designed to combat child exploitation and human trafficking in our communities and to equip employees working with the Maryland Department of Transportation with the information necessary to recognize the signs of these crimes.

This bill would require the Maryland Department of Transportation to put in place both a human trafficking recognition education training program curriculum (offering guidance to employees and contractors of Maryland transit agencies on ways to recognize and respond to the signs associated with human trafficking) and a reporting procedure to when such crimes are recognized. Additionally, the bill would require the development and implementation of human trafficking related signage and audible public service announcements throughout Maryland transit stations, airports, port facilities, and highway rest stops.

As someone who spent the majority of his professional career in law enforcement, and as someone who personally worked to stop these types of crimes as Prince George's County Sheriff, I am confident that this legislation will provide a means to protect some of those victimized by this hidden and heinous crime in our State.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 203.

The Human Trafficking Hub (1).pdf

Maryland - The Transportation Hub for Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the second fastest growing criminal enterprise in the world, with an estimated 27 million victims and $150 billion in profits each year. While approximately **14,000-17,500** people are trafficked into the United States, roughly **200,000** victims are **citizens** of the US. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation on average, are **females 12 -14** years of age. The intersectionality of sexism, racism, poverty, trauma, adultification, and sexualization are all systemic conditions that allow women and girls to become easy targets for traffickers to entrap, transport, and exploit victims.

Maryland is literally at the intersection of human trafficking in America. All major transportation thoroughfares (i.e.I-70, I-95, the Port of Baltimore, BWI Airport, Amtrak, Bus Stations, Truck Stops, Public transit, Taxes, Limousine and Rideshare services) conveniently merge into our hospitality destinations (i.e. the BLOCK, convention center, ball parks, casinos, and hotels), enabling perpetrators to easily access "Services". Counties with the highest reports of human trafficking are located along these thoroughfares.

Human trafficking can have long term, detrimental effects on victims. Women and girls forced into sex trafficking experience higher levels of depression, anxiety, isolation and trauma far beyond that of other crime victims. They sustain physical assaults resulting in serious injuries such as broken bones, concussions, bruises, burns and starvation. Birth control and gynecological care are often withheld from victims, making them susceptible to life-long and life-threatening reproductive diseases and injuries such as sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages and infertility. Drug and alcohol addiction are prevalent among victims of human trafficking.

The Maryland General Assembly is strategically poised to curb human trafficking in-state, and throughout the country. Building on the successful passage of legislation requiring Innkeepers to receive training to identify and report suspected human trafficking, **Senator Jackson introduced SB203 referred to as "See Someone, Save Someone"** which provides the same training for transportation workers. Additionally, visible signage and public service announcements in transit facilities would instruct victims on how to seek on-site assistance. Well established, on-line training videos, signage and PSAs are available in multi-languages, and free of charge.

Written Testimony Kevin Metcalf (Maryland HB 223_S

Uploaded by: Kevin Metcalf

Position: UNF

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF KEVIN METCALF
National Child Protection Task Force (NCPTF)
House Bill 223 & Senate Bill 192 – Facial Recognition Technology

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Since February 2011, I have been a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney at the Washington County Prosecutor's Office in Arkansas, where I prosecute felonies. I am also the founder and Chief Executive Officer of National Child Protection Task Force (NCPTF). The NCPTF is a non-profit organization with approximately 50 volunteers that include active-duty law enforcement officers who volunteer their time to help state, federal, and international law enforcement agencies investigate online child abuse, recover exploited children, and hunt sexual predators and human traffickers.

The members of the NCPTF help provide detectives, analysts, and officers access to investigative expertise and resources that are unavailable or underfunded in most law enforcement organizations. For example, the NCPTF brings together recognized experts in facial recognition technology, strategic legal applications, open-source intelligence, cellular mapping and analysis, dark-web investigations, and cryptocurrency to aid law enforcement agencies everywhere. Through my work as a prosecutor and with the NCPTF, I have assisted with the recovery of hundreds of missing and exploited children and helped identify and apprehend hundreds of sexual predators in multiple states and countries.

Open-source intelligence is a critical component in the timely identification and rescue of these young victims of violent crimes. In fact, without the ability to effectively process open-source intelligence, our success in these cases would be tragically impaired. I could give you hundreds of examples of children who were being sexually exploited or raped and were rescued solely because of access to open-source intelligence, but most cases follow the same general fact pattern. Law enforcement officers find videos and photos on the dark web of children being raped -- many are produced by parents, siblings, or other close family members. Law enforcement knows nothing about these children other than the fact that they are being raped and that their videos and photos are being traded or sold on the dark web.

Using traditional investigative techniques, law enforcement officers have to carefully scrutinize every second of these rape videos hoping that the perpetrators will make a mistake and reveal a clue, such as a street sign, identification card, or receipt that could give investigators a lead. On the dark web, predators maintain manuals of changes in the law, technological advances, and the methods investigators use to identify other pedophiles. The ready availability of these how-to manuals means that predators make fewer mistakes that investigators can use to track them, and children continue to be exploited and raped.

Most of the time, law enforcement only has images of helpless children's faces with no way to identify them or bring them to safety. It is fruitless to run the faces of child rape victims, many of whom are prepubescent, through traditional law enforcement facial recognition programs because these programs are typically limited to booking photos. Sometimes, the faces of predators are present, but that is still a long shot as many of the abusers have managed to avoid arrest.

We must use open-source intelligence to identify these victims and these perpetrators. And the best source of this intelligence is publicly available data and images from the internet. But as you can imagine, the vastness of the public internet makes it impossible to effectively search it by a single human investigator or even a team of investigators. It requires working collaboratively with companies that aggregate public data and publicly available images. The data they provide is data that I or any investigator in the world would already have lawful access to, but it would take months, even years, to effectively search it manually. These young victims don't have months or years, some don't have hours, before they are violated again, so there is a real urgency in the need to quickly identify the victims and suspects in these cases. The use of modern, high-performing facial recognition technology and aggregated public data and images are crucial to our continued success.

This technology and publicly available dataset helps protect children who would otherwise slip through the cracks -- children who have not been reported as missing or abused and are being raped by their parents, family members, or others close to the child.

Example of Locating Child Using FRT

In one case here in the U.S., a predator was posting images of the sexual abuse of very young children; the images indicated he had access to children and was actively raping and abusing them. However, one of the pictures he posted included the face of a young teenage girl. Using technology with an open-source database, investigators were able to identify the girl from an old Instagram account she no longer used. This allowed law enforcement to find her and identify the predator, who was actively abusing very young children. This teen's face would not appear in a driver's license database or booking photos.

MVA Database and Mug Shots Severely Limit Effectiveness of FRT in Child Exploitation Cases

Despite the misinformation out there on this subject, high-performing facial recognition technology is extremely accurate, and when used within appropriate procedures and guidelines is very effective. Facial recognition offers unprecedented capabilities to identify stalkers, rapists, child abusers, and other online predators and could facilitate identification of previously unknown child victims depicted in child sexual-abuse material proliferating online. However, limiting the data set to only that provided by the motor vehicle administration (MVA) is extraordinarily limiting. This will not help identify a deceased child, a minor victim, or a suspect traveling through the state that is not in the MVA data set. The issues related to limiting law enforcement's data set are infinite. Limiting the dataset to only MVA images and mug shots significantly increases the likelihood of misidentifications and completely omits the important work being done with facial recognition to identify children who are abused and whose images appear online.

Open-source data has been a game changer for rescuing and identifying victims such as children and identifying violent criminals that are from other states and countries. Law enforcement has

significantly increased the rate of identifying child victims of sexual abuse online using platforms of aggregated publicly available data and images. In fact, limiting datasets has many unintended consequences, aside from severely limiting its use in child exploitation cases. Restricting a law enforcement agency to look for perpetrators in criminal datasets such as mug shots is inherently biased in itself. It encourages the resolution of crimes that point to repeat offenders and discourages resolution of investigations involving unknown persons that are not in the typical local data set. Citizens should be concerned if the only data its law enforcement is permitted to use is that of its own communities.

In many investigations, but more so related to children, time is never on the side of law enforcement. While reasonable and effective policies and procedures are critical for law enforcement's use of facial recognition technology, limiting the databases or creating a complicated process where it could take days, weeks or months to use the technology could mean another child is lost. Trafficking and crimes against children move quickly. A child being sex trafficked could be in one location and then moved to another state the following day (or even that same day). If law enforcement cannot use facial recognition technology promptly because an investigator has to place multiple requests, has to obtain approval from another agency or department, and then waiting for days for a search to be returned – it will be too late, the child will be in another location.

Without facial recognition technology that uses a database of publicly available data and images, we will lose the ability to save hundreds of children from continuing to be raped, and these recordings shared on the internet for the world to see. Further, limiting law enforcement's ability to use facial recognition technology and limiting it to the MVA dataset will significantly curtail the success of law enforcement in cases where the children are victims.

Thank you for your time.

Kevin Metcalf

OPD Testimony on SB 203 Department of Transportati

Uploaded by: Maria Nenutzka Villamar

Position: UNF

NATASHA M. DARTIGUE
PUBLIC DEFENDER

KEITH LOTRIDGE
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

MELISSA ROTHSTEIN
CHIEF OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ELIZABETH HILLIARD
ACTING DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BILL: Senate Bill 203 Child Custody – Maryland Department of Transportation – Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response

FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender

POSITION: Unfavorable

DATE: 2/6/2023

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee issue an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 203. This bill will require Maryland government to expend huge sums of money to develop a training program, implement a system for reporting suspected child exploitation and human trafficking, and print and post informational posters. Moreover, this bill expands the role and responsibility of bus drivers, subway drivers, food servers at rest stops, and other civil servants into a surveillance arm of law enforcement without any evidence that such a reporting program will substantially curb the instances of child exploitation and human trafficking. It will inevitably result in overreporting, because transportation employees will want to err on the side of caution, and this will have the direct consequence of increased policing of families in Maryland. Those who take public transportation are more likely than not to be lower income people and families. More low-income families will be reported for suspected child exploitation and human trafficking, and they will be investigated by police or local department of social services. Whether these investigations lead to something more is beside the point – the fact that poor families are investigated by the government is a harm in and of itself.

In addition to the problem of over-policing of poor families, it is also a problem that transportation employees – people who drive buses, operate the subway or light rail, or work in rest-stops – are expected to be trained on a complex subject such as child exploitation and human trafficking to the degree that they can make an informed decision on whether a child is in danger. The concepts of child exploitation and human trafficking are difficult to grasp, and even more difficult to apply, even by trained professionals, like social workers and judges. A cursory training will be insufficient to teach laypersons these concepts. This bill is likely to establish a

system that is set up for failure at the expense of the State and, more importantly, the expense of innocent people and families who will suffer the numerous consequences of an unfounded report and investigation.

For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges this Committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 203.

Submitted by: Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Government Relations Division.

Authored by: Nena C. Villamar (410) 458-8857

Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Government Relations Division, 45 Calvert St, Suite 108, Annapolis MD 21401
For further information please contact Elizabeth Hilliard, Elizabeth.hilliard@maryland.gov 443-507-8414 or
Natasha Khalfani, natasha.khalfani@maryland.gov 301-580-3786.

SB0203 - TSO - Exploitation - LOI_FINAL.pdf
Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt
Position: INFO

MDOT
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lieutenant Governor

Paul J. Wiedefeld
Acting Secretary

February 8, 2023

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: *Letter of Information – Senate Bill 203 – Maryland Department of Transportation – Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response*

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 203 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 203 would require the MDOT to develop and implement a training program on the identification and reporting of suspected child exploitation and human trafficking victims. This training would be required for MDOT employees and persons employed under State contracts at transit stations, airports, port facilities, highway rest stops, or provides transit services. Senate Bill 203 would further require MDOT to develop signage with information and resources for child exploitation and human trafficking victims to be displayed at certain locations and requires frequent public service announcements with safety information pertaining to the subject matter.

It should be noted that the MDOT has demonstrated its recognition of the importance of human trafficking awareness through its offering of similar training, particularly at BWI Marshall, to both MDOT employees and other transportation-sector workers. MDOT and private employees at BWI Marshall require an MDOT-issued credential to work, and issuance of that credential is contingent upon completion of this training, as well as others. However, this specific training is unique to airports, and would not be suitable for all areas of MDOT.

Existing MDOT employee training programs within the Secretary's Office and each Transportation Business Unit (TBU) could be leveraged to develop and deliver mandatory, Department-wide training specific to child exploitation and human trafficking. MDOT would also need to consider relevant training programs and materials available through federal agencies—including the Department of Transportation (USDOT), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Department of Justice (DOJ)—to ensure consistency with existing programs and established best practices.

Internal development of a training curriculum, as well as establishment of reporting policies and procedures for MDOT employees, could be accomplished through existing programs. However, the application of these requirements to contractors doing business with the State may pose challenges in terms of implementation for the TBUs. Additionally, small businesses contracting with the State in the environments specified will be required to ensure their employees receive

mandated training. Personnel costs relating to such training are unknown at this time but would be borne by those businesses, which may in turn adjust their pricing to cover those additional costs.

Signage costs related to the legislative requirements would also be significant, with bus stop signs, for instance, costing approximately $75/sign. Signage needs would have to be determined by each affected TBU but would include numerous bus stops, Metro and Light Rail stations, MARC commuter rail stations, BWI Thurgood Marshall and Martin State airports, port facilities, and rest stops throughout the state.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 203.

Respectfully submitted,

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090

Date: February 8, 2023

Bill number: SB0203

Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Bill Title: **Maryland Department of Transportation – Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response**

DHS Position: **LETTER OF INFORMATION**

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide written information regarding Senate Bill 203 (SB 203).

Senate Bill 203 would raise awareness among transportation employees and contractors working at some of the most critical transportation junctures and intersections where child exploitation and human trafficking often occurs. Through the creation and implementation of a training program, the Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT) workforce would be intentionally trained in the identification and reporting of suspected child exploitation and human trafficking.

Senate Bill 203 aims to ensure contractors and employees in the transportation sector are better educated and trained to identify victims and be more vigilant within their workplace to witness children being exploited or trafficked. Senate Bill 203 would provide instruction and guidance to MDOT employees and contractors that frequently interact with this vulnerable population to quickly identify and report suspected trafficking to appropriate security staff, law enforcement, or the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline.

DHS serves as the state's primary social services agency and has the authority for statewide implementation of Child Protective Services (CPS) which includes sex trafficking investigations following the 2012 passage of Senate Bill 1082/House Bill 860, which made sex trafficking a form of child abuse. Currently, Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) are responsible for screening reports of children suspected to be victims of human trafficking.

As such, The Department of Human Services submits for the Committee's consideration that an amendment to §2-113 (E) include language that the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or the local Department of Social Services be included in any report made in cases where the suspected incident involves a minor.

DHS appreciates the opportunity to offer the aforementioned information for the Committee's consideration during your deliberations. DHS welcomes collaboration with the Committee on SB 203.