



# MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**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.