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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

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