



---

**Working to end sexual violence in Maryland**

P.O. Box 8782  
Silver Spring, MD 20907  
Phone: 301-565-2277  
Fax: 301-565-3619

For more information contact:  
Lisae C. Jordan, Esquire  
443-995-5544  
www.mcasa.org

**Testimony Supporting House Bill 754 with Amendments**  
**Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel**  
February 28, 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 Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Judiciary Committee to report favorably on House Bill 754 with Amendments.

**House Bill 754 – Human Sex Trafficking – Felony**

House Bill 754 would make it a felony to engage in human sex trafficking of another human being.

Current law prohibits all human sex trafficking, but categorizes some crimes as felonies and others as misdemeanors. If force, threat, coercion, or fraud is used by the pimp to compel the person to perform a sexual act, sexual contact, vaginal intercourse, or marriage, the crime is a felony. Additionally, if the victim is under 18 years old, current law makes the crime a felony. Crim.Law §3-1102. House Bill 754 expands felony human sex trafficking to cases involving all victims. Sponsor amendments would help ensure that both labor and sex trafficking are addressed.

**Victims of Human Trafficking are often Victims of Sexual Abuse**

Many victims of human trafficking have a history of childhood sexual abuse. Children who have been sexual abused at home are especially vulnerable to a pimp's promises to provide care, shelter, food, clothing and love. Many have runaway to escape abusive situations. Once lured by a pimp, the victims then find themselves trapped in a situation where they are required to submit to sexual acts.

**House Bill 754 Expands Felony Human Trafficking**

In the United States, sex trafficking commonly occurs in online escort services, residential brothels, brothels disguised as massage businesses or spas, and in street prostitution. There are two primary factors driving the spread of human trafficking: high profits and low risk. Like drug and arms trafficking, human trafficking is a market-driven criminal industry that is based on the principles of supply and demand. Every year, traffickers generate billions of dollars in profits by victimizing millions of people around the world, including here in Maryland. This crime has become a sophisticated commercial enterprise. Our laws should recognize the serious nature of human sex trafficking and categorize appropriate trafficking cases as felonies.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the  
Judiciary Committee to report favorably on House Bill 754 with Amendments**