
March 8, 2023

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

RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 1053 – Maryland Department of Transportation – Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1053 but offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

House Bill 1053 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. House Bill 1053 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

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Page Two

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. It is also unclear if the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) would be the TBU responsible for creating and facilitating the training. If so, the costs would be very significant to MTA, but are not quantifiable at this time. MDOT also notes that MTA does not regulate Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft, or the Taxi companies that MTA contracts with, which further complicates this legislation.

Signage costs related to the legislative requirements would also be significant, with bus stop signs, for instance, costing approximately \$100/sign. Signage needs would have to be determined by each affected TBU but, as the legislation is currently written, 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. MDOT would appreciate more clarity as to whether the legislation is meant to apply to all bus stops or only transit stations.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 1053.

Respectfully submitted,

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