



[www.marylandwomen.org](http://www.marylandwomen.org)

# Maryland Commission for Women

A Commission of the Maryland Department of Human Services

51 Monroe Street, Ste. 1034 – Rockville, Maryland 20850  
[www.marylandwomen.org](http://www.marylandwomen.org)

March 6, 2023

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The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair  
The Honorable David Moon, Vice Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
House Office Building – Room 101  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Maryland HB 1053 – Maryland Department of Transportation-Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response.

Dear Delegate Clippinger, Delegate Moon and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

The Maryland Commission for Women (MCW) urges you to support HB 1053 - requiring the Maryland 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; requiring transportation-sector employers to certify that employees have completed the training program; and requiring transportation-sector employers to establish procedures for reporting suspected child exploitation and human trafficking.

The MCW was established in 1965 and was set in state law in 1971. An office of the Department of Human Services, the Commission is a 25-member advisory board whose duties outlined in its enabling legislation include:

- Study the status of women in our state
- Recommend methods of overcoming discrimination
- Recognize women's accomplishments and contributions
- Provide informed advice to the executive and legislative branches of government on the issues concerning the women of our state, and
- Direct attention to critical problems confronting women.

It is to fulfill this mandate that Commission writes to you today.

Maryland has become a 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 United States. 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.

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.

This bill will undoubtedly reduce child exploitation and human trafficking. Therefore, we strongly urge your support for HB 1053, the See Someone, Save Someone legislation.

We ask that Maryland be a voice of leadership on this important issue.

The Commission for Women requests your support for the passage of this important legislation.

With very best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tawanda Bailey', written in a cursive style.

Tawanda Bailey, Chair  
Maryland Commission for Women

*Please note that the positions expressed in this letter are those of the Maryland Commission for Women and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Governor or the Department of Human Services.*