



EASTERN SHORE HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

Moving forward to combat this evil together

BILL NO:	House Bill 461
TITLE:	Education - Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program - Human and Sex Trafficking
COMMITTEE:	Ways and Means
HEARING DATE:	February 15, 2023
POSITION:	FAVORABLE

The Eastern Shore Human Trafficking Task Force supports HB 461 as it will require the State Board of Education and nonpublic schools to develop and implement a program of education on the awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault. Our children need to know how to protect themselves against human and sex trafficking HB 461 will help meet this need. It has been reported that the average age for being assaulted and/or trafficked continues to decline; therefore, it is appropriate to make materials available for students in grades 6 through 8 to promote the awareness and prevention of sex abuse and human trafficking.

Combating human trafficking and sex exploitation begins with awareness and prevention. Informing students in grades 6 - 8 will help prevent them from becoming victims and equip them to make others aware of the dangers associated with human trafficking. There are reports of arrests, convictions and sentencing of predators in the local press. It will be best if through education we prevent such crimes and not need to treat the victims and perpetrators. This is particularly true as traffickers reach their potential young victims through the electronic devices they use with great frequency.

For the above reasons, the Eastern Shore Human Trafficking Task Force requests the Committee to vote a favorable report for HB 461.