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February 8, 2024

TO: The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Adam Spangler  
Legislative Aide, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: HB148 - Department of Transportation - Human Trafficking Awareness,  
Training, and Response (See Someone, Save Someone Act)- **Support in  
Concept**

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The Office of Attorney General (OAG) supports the intent of House Bill 148, Delegate Ebersole'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."<sup>1</sup> 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."<sup>2</sup> House Bill 148 can greatly heighten awareness and, through associated reporting, improve public safety.

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<sup>1</sup> National Human Trafficking Hotline: Truck Stop-Based, available online at: <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/sex-trafficking-venuesindustries/truck-stop-based> (last visited Feb. 5, 2024).

<sup>2</sup> American Association of Airport Executives: Human Trafficking Research, available online at: <https://aaae.org/humantrafficking> (last visited Feb. 5, 2024).

While the OAG supports the intent of House Bill 148, we have concerns about implementation of the bill. Subsection (f) of the bill provide that “an employer or employee may not be held civilly or criminally liable for reporting or responding in good faith to a suspected incident of child exploitation or human trafficking.” The exemption from criminal liability for any “response” to a suspected incident, so long as in good faith, may be overbroad. The bill does not define what a “response” to an incident might entail.

Additionally, there is concern about requirements for contractors. As is, House Bill 148 is vague as to whether the requirements for “contractors” apply to just those with direct contracts with the State or would the bill also apply to subcontractors at the airport?

For the foregoing reason, we urge the Committee to favorably report House Bill 148.

cc: Committee Members