



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DAWN LUEDTKE
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 7

January 30, 2024

The Honorable William C. Smith
Chair, Judicial Proceedings
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: *Senate Bill 153, Maryland Department of Transportation - Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response.*

Dear Chair Smith,

As we wrap up Human Trafficking Prevention month, I write to urge the Committee's support for Senate Bill 153 - Maryland Department of Transportation - Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response.

According to the U.S. Department of State, an estimated 27.6 million people around the world are victims of human trafficking, in which violence, threats, deception, coercion, and other tactics are used to manipulate people of all ages into providing labor or services unwillingly, including forced participation in commercial sex work. Maryland must do its part to prevent and respond to human trafficking through educational and awareness programs such as those that would be authorized by the passage of SB153. Our transportation sector plays a unique role in the facilitation of trafficked victims throughout Maryland, and can play a vital role in stopping it. I am a member of the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee, which is working with our local Ride On bus service to feature messaging making people aware of signs of human trafficking and providing contact information for intervention and support.

The bill offers a training program to empower transportation workers with the basic knowledge and understanding necessary to identify and report instances of human trafficking and child exploitation. This will help to reduce the victimization of vulnerable populations targeted by traffickers for sexual and labor exploitation.

The affirmative actions required by SB153 will go a long way to strengthening human trafficking prevention efforts and boosting our "see something, say something" crime prevention through

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information sharing and awareness. I appreciate the Fiscal & Policy Note referencing other education and awareness efforts undertaken with respect to our K-12 public schools, at the time of licensure for CDL holders, and for innkeepers. SB153 represents the next natural step to educate both those who work within the transportation industry and members of the public who are using public transportation, stopping at our rest areas, transit stations, airports, and ports to heighten awareness.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Luedtke', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

Dawn Luedtke
Montgomery County Council
District 7

cc: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee