

DAVID PENDELTON SR.
Chairperson/Director

TOM CAHILL
Vice Chairperson/Assistant
Director

BRITTANY GARRIS
Secretary



ANNAPOLIS OFFICE
99 Cathedral Street
Suite 201
Annapolis, MD 21401-2597

PH: (240) 271-9420
smartmdsla@yahoo.com

HB 1 - Department of Transportation – Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response (See Someone, Save Someone Act)

Judiciary Proceedings
Maryland Senate
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher and Members of the Committee

My name is David Pendleton, I am the Director of the Maryland Safety and Legislative Board of the Transportation Division of SMART. We represent transportation-sector employees who work for MARC and Amtrak in commuter and long-distance service. I am urging a favorable report on **HB1**, the “**see someone - save someone act.**”

HB1 would require the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop and implement a training program for our members employed in the transportation-sector on the identification and reporting of human trafficking. According to the State Department, “there are 27.6 million people globally who are subjected to human trafficking and forced labor. It’s responsible for an estimated \$150 billion annually in illicit profits. Human trafficking disproportionately impacts some of the most vulnerable and underserved members of our society. It erodes the safety and health of our communities and transportation networks, the security of our borders, the strength of our economy, and the rule of law.”

A 2018 Polaris Project study of 104 survivors found that 11% of human trafficking victims are transported on long-distance Amtrak Trains, and 29% on subway/commuter rail. The study also found that “the use of buses and trains may be a preferred method of transportation for traffickers because of the low cost and limited interaction with bureaucratic systems. This allows them more anonymity in the ticket buying process and less attention from officials.”

Our members who work in commuter and passenger service are the first responders to any issues experienced with operations. They are in constant contact with the traveling public and are vigilant in observing their surroundings. With the proper training they can be a great asset in the fight against human trafficking. Human trafficking is a heinous crime that has no boundaries. It is perpetrated on its victims from small towns to large cities and everywhere in between. Prevention requires action and the more employees are trained in recognizing and reporting these acts the easier it is for them to “**see someone - save someone.**”

Governor Moore, in his 2024 State of the State speech, called for action on public safety as one of his top priorities. Nothing is more important than protecting the citizens of this state from criminals, especially our children.

SMART proudly supports this bill and emphatically urges a favorable report on HB1!

Sincerely,

David Sr

David Pendleton Sr., Chairperson/Director
Maryland Safety & Legislative Board, LO-023
SMART Transportation Division