



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

January 22, 2025

**Senate Bill 7**

**Department of Transportation – Human Trafficking Awareness, Training, and Response (See Someone, Save Someone Act)  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

**Senate Bill 7** requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop or identify and implement a training program for transportation sector employees on the identification and reporting of suspected human trafficking victims; requiring transportation sector employers to certify by January 1, 2026, and each year thereafter that certain employees have completed the training program; requiring new employees to receive training within 90 days of hiring; removing civil and criminal liability for reporting of suspected trafficking.

The MCC supports this bill because it emphasizes the importance of training programs to educate individuals in the transportation sector on how to identify and report human trafficking. Such training is critical for reducing the prevalence of trafficking, aiding law enforcement in their efforts to combat this crime and increasing public awareness about how to assist in the fight against trafficking.

Maryland's central location makes it a significant hub for human trafficking, serving as both a pass-through state and a destination for traffickers. Traffickers frequently utilize Maryland's extensive transportation network, including major highways like Interstate 95, to connect victims to large East Coast cities such as New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. Incidents of sex trafficking have been identified at Maryland truck stops, with data from the National Human Trafficking Resource Center indicating that approximately 70% of trafficking cases in the U.S. occur at truck stops.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mdhumantrafficking.org/maryland>

Recent cases illustrate how transportation hubs facilitate trafficking. For example, in a 2024 case in Maryland, a trafficker recruited women in Hagerstown transported them across Maryland to Baltimore and exploited them in hotels near BWI Marshall Airport and local stadiums.<sup>2</sup> These examples underscore the critical need for targeted training and awareness initiatives. Pope Francis has repeatedly condemned the atrocity of human trafficking, calling it “an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ.”<sup>3</sup> This bill is a significant step forward in addressing the exploitation of vulnerable individuals by equipping key sectors with the tools to recognize and prevent trafficking. It represents a meaningful contribution to the fight against child exploitation and human trafficking in Maryland.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **SB 7**.

Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://mcase.org/news/post/maryland-sex-trafficking-case-shows-typical-red-flags-for-exploitation-expe>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/april/documents/papa-francesco\\_20140410\\_tratta-persone-umane.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/april/documents/papa-francesco_20140410_tratta-persone-umane.html)