



Senate Finance Committee

March 25, 2026

House Bill 771 – *Health Occupations – Human Trafficking Awareness Training*

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support with amendment** for House Bill 771.

As written, House Bill 771 requires each health occupations board to adopt regulations allowing continuing education credit for a human trafficking awareness training program that is at least one hour long, provided at no cost, and approved by the Department of Health in consultation with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force and survivor service providers. The training must cover the definition of human trafficking, trauma-informed care principles, indicators in health care settings, appropriate screening protocols, and reporting requirements under State law.

We recommend broadening the training to also include child maltreatment recognition, reporting, and trauma-informed response. Child victims are often at risk for both abuse and trafficking, and including such instruction would strengthen provider competency and reporting protections across these overlapping areas.

Interstate 95 is a major trafficking corridor through Maryland, which increases the likelihood that victims, including children, will encounter physicians and other health care providers while in transit, often presenting with injuries or conditions linked to exploitation. Training on child maltreatment alongside human trafficking would equip providers to recognize overlapping signs of abuse, deliver trauma-informed care, and ensure that vulnerable minors receive immediate protection and appropriate reporting, reinforcing the safety net for children at the intersection of trafficking and abuse.

The AAP has published policy and clinical guidance on [*Human Trafficking and Exploitation of Children and Adolescents*](#), emphasizing the pediatrician's role in identifying and caring for trafficked children using a trauma-informed approach. These resources support the inclusion of child maltreatment training as part of House Bill 771's continuing education requirements. With the amendment noted, MDAAP urges a favorable report.

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