



**BILL NUMBER:** SB 231

**TITLE:** Sexual Solicitation of a Minor – Solicitation Through Parent, Guardian, or Custodian – Prohibition and Penalties

**COMMITTEE:** Judicial Proceedings

**HEARING DATE:** January 30, 2020

**POSITION:** SUPPORT

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**Summary:** The Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force (MDHTTF) supports Senate Bill 231. Task Force members urge a favorable report for this legislation as it will make a significant impact on survivors of human trafficking throughout the state.

**Testimony:** Senate Bill 231 prohibits a person from knowingly soliciting the consent of a parent, guardian, or custodian of a minor to engage the minor in certain unlawful activities. Most notably for anti-trafficking efforts, these crimes include crimes related to prostitution, including engaging in prostitution, receiving the earnings of a prostitute, procuring or soliciting prostitution, and maintaining a house of prostitution.

Not only would this bill assist in halting the induction of new trafficking victims, it would also add another avenue for the prosecution of known, suspected, or potential human traffickers if they previously have been unable to be stopped for this crime. Further, it is another way to arrest and/or prosecute those traffickers who have before now been able to slip through the cracks.

The MDHTTF appreciates your consideration and respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 231.

**About MDHTTF:** Formed in 2007 by the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Attorney General of Maryland, and the State’s Attorney for Baltimore City, MDHTTF serves as the lead investigative, prosecutorial, and victim services coordinating body for anti-human trafficking activity in the State of Maryland. MDHTTF has grown to include most law enforcement agencies in the State, all child-serving state agencies, the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Homeland Security Investigations, most local State’s Attorney’s Offices, and dozens of victim service agencies. MDHTTF is comprised of five committees – legislative, law enforcement, victim services, public awareness, and training. During this time, MDHTTF has grown a robust understanding of the issue of human trafficking in Maryland.