



EASTERN SHORE HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

Moving forward to combat this evil together

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
Room 101, House Office Building
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

January 28, 2020

Dear Chairman Clippinger,

HB 242 - Criminal Procedure - Motion to Vacate Judgment - Human Trafficking (True Freedom Act of 2020)

There is a major difference between a criminal and a victim. A criminal deserves what they get, while a victim of human trafficking does not. HB 242 recognizes and remedies this difference. A victim of human trafficking, sex and labor exploitation, who has been treated as a criminal deserves a process to get out from under that conviction that is why the Eastern Shore Human Trafficking Task Force urges the Judicial Proceedings Committee to give HB 242 a favorable report.


Treatment of the victims and survivors of human trafficking, both sex and labor exploitation, is a matter of great concern to the Eastern Shore Human Trafficking Task Force. Human trafficking is taking place throughout Maryland not just on the eastern shore. For the traffickers it is high profit and low risk. For the victims and their families, it is a far-reaching long-term tragedy.

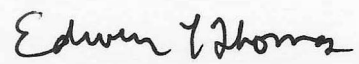
There are crimes, in addition to prostitution, such as drug possession and theft that human trafficking victims are forced to commit by their trafficker/pimp the conviction for which should be eligible for vacation relief. Currently the process allows/requires the original prosecutor (agency) to judge his/her/their prior action before there is even the possibility that a victim can get before the court. That would and should be changed by HB 242.

Persons who have been victimized need to be able to get out from under criminal records which seriously impede their ability to return to a life style that we enjoy. A human trafficking victim should not continue throughout life to be victimized by an act they were forced to commit.

HB 242 will overcome the inadequacies of the current law which fail to provide needed relief for both sex and labor trafficking related convictions. **For these reasons we urge the Committee to vote a favorable report for HB 242.**

Yours Truly,


Ann Holladay, Co-Chair
6590 Cedar Cove Road
Royal Oak, MD 21662


Edwin Thomas, Co-Chair
1562 Efford Road
Pasadena, MD 21122