



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

9830 Patuxent Woods Drive ■ Columbia, Maryland 21046 ■ 410-313-6400 voice/relay

---

Jacqueline R. Scott, Director  
communityresources@howardcountymd.gov

FAX 410-313-6424

October 15, 2019

Howard County Council  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Council Members:

On behalf of the Department of Community Resources and Services (DCRS), I am pleased to submit testimony regarding CB52-2019 *An ACT to Establish a Human Trafficking Prevention Coordination Council*.

In 2014 Howard County commissioned the first Howard County Human Trafficking Task Force. The members of that Task Force concluded that there was a strong basis to recommend the following: increased services to victims; human trafficking awareness education for everyone in our community; and additional coordination between and among our various partnering agencies and community-based organizations.

In 2017 the Office of Human Trafficking Prevention was created within the Department of Community Resources and Services (DCRS) and an Executive Order establishing the Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinating Council was implemented. The Executive Order required the Council to conduct the following activities: Review and prioritize the recommendations of the Human Trafficking Task Force Report of 2014, and advise the County Executive on effective methods and organizational structure to permanently coordinate and sustain human trafficking prevention efforts in the County. The Coordinating Council began meeting in FY18 (mid 2017) focused on these tasks.

The Council met eight times; and held a survivor-focused, County-wide Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Conference on October 26, 2018. Three focus groups were held with HTPCC Members and designees, on December 11, 18, and 19, 2018. A follow-up questionnaire was sent to this group on January 24, 2019. The information shared during all the Coordinating Committee's activities informed the recommendation to establish a permanent council as described in CB52-2019.

The proposed legislation before you: 1) maintains the current categories of membership from both the 2014 and 2017 Human Trafficking Prevention bodies; 2) expands membership to include the business community, the hospital, and the number of seats for survivors and community members; and 3) specifically defines the scope and duties of the council.

The creation of a permanent Human Trafficking Prevention Council will enhance our ability as a community to effectively combat the problem of human trafficking in Howard County. We ask for your support for this legislation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline R. Scott, JD, M.L  
Director

*The Department of Community Resources and Services provides vital human services through its offices of ADA Coordination, Aging and Independence, Children and Families, Community Partnerships, Consumer Protection, Human Trafficking Prevention, Local Children's Board, and Veterans and Military Families.*