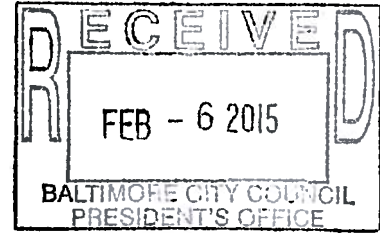




Baltimore City Department of Social Services



Molly Tierney Director

February 5, 2015

Talmadge Branch Building 1910 N. Broadway Baltimore, Maryland 21213

Honorable Bernard "Jack" Young Members of the City Council 1910 N. Broadway Street Baltimore, MD 21213

Director's Office: 443-378-4600

Dear Mr. President and Members of the City Council:

General Information: 1-800-332-6347

As the Director of the Baltimore City Department of Social Services (BCDSS) I reviewed Bill 14-0464 as it is written and certainly support the intent of the proposed bill, encouraging training and increasing enforcement. We recognize human trafficking exploits vulnerable individuals, including innocent children, and subjects victims to violence, sexual assault, and in many cases prostitution. We are grateful for the City Council's leadership in helping to combat this deplorable industry. Preventing and detecting these crimes is a matter of utmost importance at BCDSS.



In 2007, the General Assembly passed a bill (SB 606/HB 876), which officially criminalized the act of human trafficking. Portions of this legislation were codified under Section 11-303 of the Maryland Criminal Law. Current state law only defines human trafficking as a felony offense when it involves minors under the age of 18. Trafficking of a person between the ages of 18-21 is currently a misdemeanor.

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake Mayor

State Statute §15-207 currently allows for the criminalization of any lodging establishment that fails to post "Report Human Trafficking" signs in prominent locations on the property where arrests leading to convictions of prostitution, solicitation of a minor or human trafficking have occurred.

As the government entity responsible for protecting children from abuse and neglect, I believe the current state legislation mentioned above provides the required protection.

I am confident the City Council will take a deliberate and measured approach to evaluating the bill and recognize the Council acts in the best interest of Baltimore's most vulnerable adults and children.

Submitted Respectfully,

Molly Tierney Director, Baltimore City Department of Social Services

Cc: Dawn Kirstaetter, Deputy Mayor Angela Gibson, Mayor's Legislative Liaison

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