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	Subject: Position:	CC #19-0323 FAVORABLE		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o 409 City Hall

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The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review City Council bill #19-0323, entitled “Hotels – Anti-Human Trafficking Training.” This legislation will require hotels to provide all hotel employees with anti-human trafficking training on an annual basis.

In 2015, the Mayor and City Council enacted comprehensive human trafficking prevention legislation, City Council bill #14-0464. The bill, in part, required that all hotels provide a certified training course to all new employees within 30 days of their hire on how to identify human trafficking activities and human trafficking victims. By limiting the training requirement to new employees within 30 days of hire, the current law’s impact is diminished. Existing employees, as well as new hires, must be trained on how to identify suspected human trafficking. City Council bill #19-0323 addresses this gap, thereby improving upon existing law.

Human trafficking is a serious issue in Maryland, with Baltimore City at its epicenter. The National Human Trafficking Hotline (Hotline) reported that 138 victims, 86 traffickers, and 24 trafficking businesses were identified in Maryland.¹ As of June 2018, the Hotline received 170 calls. Through those calls, 72 cases of human trafficking were identified.² Mapping of the call data showed a concentration in Baltimore City. Over the course of five-years (July 2013 through July 2018), over 440 cases of child sex trafficking were reported via the Hotline, a majority of which involved Maryland residents living in Baltimore between the ages of 14 and 17.³

¹ National Human Trafficking Hotline. (2017). Maryland Spotlight 2017.
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/sites/default/files/2017%20Maryland%20State%20Report.pdf>

² National Human Trafficking Hotline. (2018, June 30). Maryland.
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/state/maryland>

³ Council Bill – 18-0290, <https://baltimore.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3703128&GUID=68D5EC33-EECE-49D1-954A-053782F64139&Options=ID|Text|&Search=18-029>

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline Data Report, hotels and motels are the most frequent venues for sex trafficking.⁴ The concerning prevalence of human trafficking incidents at hotels has prompted various states and hotel chains to mandate similar human trafficking training programs. For example, Minnesota requires all hotel and motel employees to participate in a 40 minute training that focuses on identifying warning signs of trafficking.⁵ Marriot International, one of the world's largest hotel chains, began a mandatory human trafficking training program in 2017, and has since trained over 500,000 employees in spotting signals of trafficking.⁶

Human Trafficking is a severe violation of human rights and its end should be a moral imperative. The physical and emotional trauma sustained as a result trafficking can follow victims for the rest of their lives. According to a study of commercial sex trafficking victims in the United States, 47% of youth victims reported previous suicide attempts and nearly 4 in 5 youth met criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder.⁷ Another study found that almost half of adolescent female victims in the sample reported having acquired a sexually transmitted disease as a result of trafficking and nearly a third reported pregnancy.⁸ Educating key groups like hotel employees on how to spot, prevent, and report trafficking is an important step in getting survivors the support they need and deserve.

Considering the lasting, severe health effects of trafficking, a more coordinated and effective public health response is needed. This bill is an important part of bolstering this response. It will have minor operational, and no fiscal, impact on the Baltimore City Health Department. It will, however, further the mission of BCHD by expanding knowledge about human trafficking, promoting identification and reporting of trafficking incidents, and helping to increase the use of victim services.

For the above reasons, BCHD urges a **favorable report** on City Council bill #19-0323.

⁴ National Human Trafficking Hotline. (2017, September). *2016 National Hotline Annual Report*. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/sites/default/files/2016%20National%20Report.pdf>

⁵ Temblador, A. (2018, November 4). Sex Trafficking Training Required for all Minnesota Hotels. Travel Pulse. <https://www.travelpulse.com/news/hotels-and-resorts/sex-trafficking-training-required-for-all-minnesota-hotels.html>

⁶ Hotel Business. (2019, January 19). Marriot has Trained 500,000 Workers to Recognize Human Trafficking Signs. Hotel Business. <https://www.hotelbusiness.com/marriott-has-trained-500000-workers-to-recognize-human-trafficking-signs/>

⁷ Greenbaum VJ (2017) Child sex trafficking in the United States: Challenges for the healthcare provider. *PLoS Med* 14(11): e1002439. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1002439>

⁸ Ibid.