

## MEMORANDUM

October 6, 2017

TO: County Council

FROM: Robert H. Drummer, Senior Legislative Attorney



SUBJECT: **Action:** Bill 27-17, Human Rights and Civil Liberties - Human Trafficking Prevention Committee – Established

**Health and Human Services Committee recommendation (3-0): enact the Bill with amendments.**

Bill 27-17, Human Rights and Civil Liberties – Human Trafficking Prevention Committee - Established, sponsored by Council President Berliner at the request of the County Executive was introduced on July 25. A public hearing was held on September 19 and a Health and Human Services Committee worksession was held on October 2.

Bill 27-17 would:

- (1) establish the Human Trafficking Prevention Committee;
- (2) define the membership of the Committee; and
- (3) define the duties and responsibilities of the Committee.

### Background

The County currently has a Human Trafficking Task Force that meets to develop methods of preventing human trafficking in the County. The current Human Trafficking Task Force is not a permanent committee created by law. The Task Force would also like to be able to work with the Commission for Women to raise and spend money on human trafficking related issues. Bill 27-17 would establish a permanent committee with 15 voting members appointed by the Executive subject to Council confirmation. Under the Bill, the Executive should appoint:

- (1) an employee of the Montgomery County Public Schools;
- (2) an employee of the County State's Attorney's Office;
- (3) a member of the Montgomery County Judiciary;
- (4) an employee of the County Sheriff's Office;
- (5) a member of the County Council;
- (6) an employee of the County Police Department;
- (7) an employee of the County Department of Health and Human Services;
- (8) an employee of the County Office of Intergovernmental Relations;
- (9) an employee of the County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation;
- (10) a member of the County's Commission for Women;

- (11) a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission;
- (12) two voting members from two different advocacy organizations;
- (13) an owner or employee of a non-profit service provider; and
- (14) an academic advisor.

The Committee may also include an additional 8 nonvoting *ex officio* members.

The Bill would require the Committee to:

- (1) adopt rules and procedures as necessary to perform its functions;
- (2) keep a record of its activities and minutes of all meetings, which must be kept on file and open to the public during business hours upon request;
- (3) develop and distribute information about human trafficking in the County;
- (4) promote educational activities that increase the understanding of human trafficking in the County;
- (5) develop and recommend interagency coordinated strategies for reducing human trafficking in the County;
- (6) advise the Council, the Executive, County agencies, and State elected officials about human trafficking in the County, and recommend policies, programs, legislation, or regulations necessary to reduce human trafficking;
- (7) submit an annual report by October 1 of each year to the Executive and Council on the activities of the Committee, including the source and amount of any contributions received to support the activities of the Committee; and
- (8) establish three subcommittees: the Legislative Subcommittee; the Victim Services Subcommittee; and the Education and Outreach Subcommittee.

The County Attorney's Office found no legal issues with the Bill. See ©14.

### **Public Hearing**

All 5 speakers at the hearing supported the Bill. Jodi Finkelstein, Executive Director of the Commission for Women, testifying on behalf of the Executive (©15), Elissa Balsley, Montgomery County National Organization for Women (©16), Nicole Drew, Montgomery County Commission for Women (©17-18), Andrea Powell, FAIR Girls (©19-20), and Heidi Alvarez, University of Maryland SAFE Center (©21-22) each stressed the need to develop strategies for responding to and preventing human trafficking in the County. They each argued that a permanent Committee dedicated to this issue would help the County to continue to work on eliminating human trafficking in the County.

### **HHS Worksession**

Councilmembers Hucker and Katz attended the worksession in addition to the Committee members. Jodi Finkelstein, Executive Director of the Commission for Women, represented the Executive Branch. The Committee discussed the need for the new Committee with Ms. Finkelstein. The Committee recommended (3-0) two amendments:

- (1) amend lines 23-24 to recommend that the Executive appoint a designee of the Council instead of a Councilmember; and
- (2) delete lines 110-114 authorizing the Committee to solicit contributions from public and private sources.

The Committee recommended (3-0) enactment of the Bill with these amendments.

## Issues

### 1. What is the fiscal and economic impact of the Bill?

OMB estimated that the Bill would have no fiscal impact. See ©9. The Bill would require the Commission for Women to staff the Committee. The Executive Director for the Commission for Women estimated that she already spends 40-50% of her time working with the current Task Force, and that she would spend the same amount of time working with the Committee instead of the Task Force if the Bill is enacted.

### 2. Should the Human Trafficking Prevention Committee include a member of the County Commission for Women and a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission?

County Code §2-148 states:

To promote broad participation, no individual should ordinarily serve more than 2 consecutive full terms or serve on more than one group at any one time. However, an individual may serve on more than one group at the same time if the law that created a committee requires or allows a member of that group to be selected from members of another County group.

Although the standard procedure is to limit individuals to serving on 1 group at any one time, the law does permit an individual to serve on more than 1 group in this situation. **Committee recommendation (3-0):** no change.

### 3. Should the Committee include a Councilmember or a person designated by the Council?

The Bill would recommend that the Executive appoint a Councilmember to the Committee. There are 2 Councilmembers currently serving on the Task Force, but they are generally represented by a Council staff person. If a Councilmember is appointed as a voting member of the Committee, a Council staff person asked to represent the Councilmember at a meeting would not be permitted to vote. The Committee may want to consider amending the Bill to recommend that the Executive appoint a person designated by the Council to represent the Council. It should be noted that the Council President or the President's designee is also listed in the Bill as an *ex officio* non-voting member. **Committee recommendation (3-0):** amend the Bill to recommend that the Executive appoint a person designated by the Council. See lines 23-24 at ©2.

### 4. Should the Bill permit the Committee to solicit contributions from public and private sources to support its activities?

County Code §19A-16 generally prohibits a public employee from soliciting gifts to the employee or another from a restricted donor. The Bill would waive this provision to permit members of the Committee to solicit gifts to the Committee. It is unclear what the Committee would do with these funds. None of the duties listed in the Bill for the Committee appear to require additional funds beyond the staff resources from the Commission for Women. In fact, the OMB fiscal impact statement estimates that the Committee will not require additional funds beyond what the Task Force already spends. This is different than the private County Economic Development Corporation created by the County. The Committee

would be a permanent group that is part of the County government charged with recommending best strategies to combat human trafficking. As part of the County government, the Committee would not be authorized to spend money that was not appropriated by the Council. There is no compelling reason to waive the Ethics rules on soliciting gifts for these County employees while serving on this Committee. Jodi Finkelstein, Executive Director of the Commission for Women, told the Committee that the Executive did not oppose removing this provision. **Committee recommendation (3-0):** amend the Bill to delete this provision. See lines 110-114 at ©6.

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Bill No. 27-17  
Concerning: Human Rights and Civil Liberties - Human Trafficking Prevention Committee – Established  
Revised: October 2, 2017 Draft No. 4  
Introduced: July 25, 2017  
Expires: January 25, 2019  
Enacted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Effective: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sunset Date: None  
Ch. \_\_\_\_\_, Laws of Mont. Co. \_\_\_\_\_

## COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Lead Sponsor: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

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**AN ACT** to:

- (1) establish the Human Trafficking Prevention Committee;
- (2) define the membership of the Committee;
- (3) define the duties and responsibilities of the Committee; and
- (4) generally amend the laws governing the prevention of human trafficking.

By amending

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 27, Human Rights and Civil Liberties  
Article VIII, Section 27-62

<b>Boldface</b>	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:*

1 **Sec 1. Section 27-62 is amended as follows:**

2 **Article VIII [RESERVED] HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION**  
 3 **COMMITTEE.**

4 **Sec. 27-62. [Reserved.] Human Trafficking Prevention Committee.**

5 (a) Members. The Executive must appoint, subject to confirmation by the  
 6 Council, a Human Trafficking Prevention Committee. The Committee  
 7 must have 15 voting members and up to 10 ex-officio nonvoting  
 8 members. Each voting member must, when appointed, reside in the  
 9 County.

10 (1) Voting members. The voting members must broadly reflect the  
 11 geographic, economic, and social diversity of the County. Each  
 12 voting member should be associated with an organization involved  
 13 in addressing some aspect of human trafficking or have a direct  
 14 interest in an issue related to human trafficking.

15 (A) One voting member should be an employee of the  
 16 Montgomery County Public Schools.

17 (B) One voting member should be an employee of the County  
 18 State's Attorney's Office.

19 (C) One voting member should be a member of the  
 20 Montgomery County Judiciary.

21 (D) One voting member should be an employee of the County  
 22 Sheriff's Office.

23 (E) One voting member should be a [[member]] designee of the  
 24 County Council.

25 (F) One voting member should be an employee of the County  
 26 Police Department.

(G) One voting member should be an employee of the County Department of Health and Human Services.

(H) One voting member should be an employee of the County Office of Intergovernmental Relations.

(I) One voting member should be an employee of the County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation.

(J) One voting member should be a member of the County's Commission for Women.

(K) One voting member should be a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission.

(L) Two voting members should be from two different advocacy organizations.

(M) One voting member should be an owner or employee of a non-profit service provider.

(N) One voting member should be an academic advisor.

(2) Nonvoting members.

(A) The Committee must also include the following *ex officio* nonvoting members:

(i) the Council President or the President's designee;

(ii) the County Executive or the Executive's designee;

(iii) the Director of the Department of Permitting Services or the Director's designee;

(iv) the Director of the Commission on Human Rights or the Director's designee; and

(v) the Director of the Office of Community Partnerships or the Director's designee; and

(B) The Committee may also include the following *ex officio* nonvoting members;

(i) One Senator or the Senator's designee from the Montgomery County Delegation selected by the Chair of the County's Senate Delegation;

(ii) One Delegate or the Delegate's designee from the Montgomery County Delegation selected by the Chair of the County's House Delegation; and

(iii) the President or the President's designee of an appropriate health care agency located in the County that serves victims of human trafficking.

(3) Term. Each voting member serves a 3-year term. A voting member must not serve more than 2 consecutive full terms. A member appointed to fill a vacancy serves the rest of the unexpired term. Members continue in office until their successors are appointed and qualified.

(4) Compensation. Voting and nonvoting members must receive no compensation for their services.

(5) Removal. The Executive, with the consent of the Council, may remove a member for neglect or inability to perform the duties of the office, misconduct in office, or a serious violation of law. Before the Executive removes a member, the Executive must give the member notice of the reason for removal and a reasonable opportunity to reply.

(b) Chair and Vice Chair. The Committee must annually elect one voting member as chair and another as vice chair, and may elect other officers.



(c) Meetings. The Committee may meet at the call of the chair as often as required to perform its duties, but at least six times each year. The Committee must also meet if a majority of the voting members submit a written request for a meeting to the chair at least 7 days before the proposed meeting. A majority of the voting members are a quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority of voting members present at any meeting with a quorum may take an action.

(d) Staff. The Commission for Women must provide the Committee with staff, offices, and supplies as are appropriate for it.

(e) Duties. The Committee must:

- (1) adopt rules and procedures as necessary to perform its functions;
- (2) keep a record of its activities and minutes of all meetings, which must be kept on file and open to the public during business hours upon request;
- (3) develop and distribute information about human trafficking in the County;
- (4) promote educational activities that increase the understanding of human trafficking in the County;
- (5) develop and recommend interagency coordinated strategies for reducing human trafficking in the County;
- (6) advise the Council, the Executive, County agencies, and State elected officials about human trafficking in the County, and recommend policies, programs, legislation, or regulations necessary to reduce human trafficking;
- (7) submit an annual report by October 1 of each year to the Executive and Council on the activities of the Committee, including the

105 source and amount of any contributions received to support the  
 106 activities of the Committee; and

107 (8) establish three subcommittees: the Legislative Subcommittee; the  
 108 Victim Services Subcommittee; and the Education and Outreach  
 109 Subcommittee.

110 (f) [[Contributions. Notwithstanding the Ethics restrictions in Chapter 19A,  
 111 the Committee may solicit and accept contributions from public and  
 112 private sources to support the activities of the Committee. Committee  
 113 staff must not solicit or accept contributions for the Committee, but may  
 114 be assigned administrative tasks related to Committee fundraising.

115 (g) Advocacy. The Committee must not engage in any advocacy activity at  
 116 the State or federal levels unless that activity is approved by the Office of  
 117 Intergovernmental Relations.

## 118 **Sec 2. Transition - Staggered Terms.**

119 The individual terms of the voting members must be staggered. Of the voting  
 120 members first appointed, five must be appointed for a 1-year term, five must be  
 121 appointed for a 2-year term, and five must be appointed for a 3-year term.

## LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Bill 27-17

*Human Rights and Civil Liberties - Human Trafficking Prevention Committee – Established*

<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	This Bill establishes a Human Trafficking Committee.
<b>PROBLEM:</b>	The current Human Trafficking Task Force is unable to officially advise the County Executive or Council because it does not have the written authority to do so. The Task Force would also like to be able to work with the Commission for Women to raise and spend money on human trafficking related issues.
<b>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:</b>	Change the current Human Trafficking Task Force from a temporary entity to a permanent Committee.
<b>COORDINATION:</b>	Commission for Women and the Office of the County Attorney.
<b>FISCAL IMPACT:</b>	Office of Management and Budget.
<b>ECONOMIC IMPACT:</b>	Office of Finance.
<b>EVALUATION:</b>	Subject to the general oversight of the County Executive and the County Council. The Office of the County Attorney will evaluate for form and legality.
<b>EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE:</b>	Unknown
<b>SOURCE OF INFORMATION:</b>	Kathryn Lloyd Associate County Attorney Office of the County Attorney  Jodi Finkelstein Executive Director Commission for Women
<b>APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES:</b>	N/A
<b>PENALTIES:</b>	N/A




OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett  
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

July 13, 2017

TO: Roger Berliner, President  
County Council

FROM: Isiah Leggett, County Executive 

SUBJECT: Legislation Establishing the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee

I am submitting for introduction the attached bill that would create the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee. The purpose of the bill is to move the current task force from a temporary entity to a permanent one.

The Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force was created in 2014 to increase understanding of the issue of human trafficking in Montgomery County and to develop interagency coordination of strategies for response and prevention. At the January 20, 2016, task force meeting, Bobbe Mintz, Chair and Women's Commissioner, suggested that the task force become a permanent entity that would function under the auspices of the Montgomery County Commission for Women. The task force members in attendance unanimously agreed.

The nature of human trafficking consistently changes and needs long-term attention. We must create a permanent entity that can address this horrific issue in a timely and sensitive manner. Your assistance is appreciated.

IL/jf

Attachment

**Fiscal Impact Statement**  
**Bill XX-17 – Committee on Human Trafficking**

**1. Legislative Summary**

The Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force formed three years ago based on a recommendation from the Montgomery County Commission for Women (CFW). This bill makes the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force a permanent committee under the CFW, allowing members to officially advise, recommend, advocate, etc., on issues pertaining to human trafficking.

**2. An estimate of changes in County revenues and expenditures regardless of whether the revenues or expenditures are assumed in the recommended or approved budget. Includes source of information, assumptions, and methodologies used.**

According to the CFW, this bill would have no impact on revenues or expenditures as this simply changes the current structure from a task force to a committee. The committee will be staffed by the executive director of the CFW. The executive director currently supports the task force which is chaired by a member of the CFW.

**3. Revenue and expenditure estimates covering at least the next 6 fiscal years.**

See response #2.

**4. An actuarial analysis through the entire amortization period for each bill that would affect retiree pension or group insurance costs.**

Not applicable.

**5. An estimate of expenditures related to County's information technology (IT) systems, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.**

Not applicable.

**6. Later actions that may affect future revenue and expenditures if the bill authorizes future spending.**

Not applicable.

**7. An estimate of the staff time needed to implement the bill.**

The executive director of the CFW estimates 40-50% of her time will be spent on the committee; however, this is time that was already spent on the task force.

**8. An explanation of how the addition of new staff responsibilities would affect other duties.**

This is currently a part of the executive director's duties. However, as the committee increases work volume, additional staffing may be needed.

**9. An estimate of costs when an additional appropriation is needed.**

Not applicable.

**10. A description of any variable that could affect revenue and cost estimates.**

Not applicable.

**11. Ranges of revenue or expenditures that are uncertain or difficult to project.**

Not applicable.

**12. If a bill is likely to have no fiscal impact, why that is the case.**


A human trafficking prevention task force already exists in the county. This bill simply changes the structure from a task force to a committee.

**13. Other fiscal impacts or comments.**

Not applicable.

**14. The following contributed to and concurred with this analysis:**

Jodi Finkelstein, Executive Director, Montgomery County Commission for Women  
Corey Orlosky, Office of Management and Budget

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer A. Hughes, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

4/20/17  
Date

**Economic Impact Statement**  
**Bill #-17, Concerning: Committee on Human Trafficking**

**Background:**

This legislation would create the Commission on Human Trafficking and outline the duties and responsibilities of the Commission on Human Trafficking. Currently, the Human Trafficking Task Force (Task Force) is unable to officially advise the County Executive and the County Council because the Task Force does not have written authority to advise the County Executive and the County Council. Bill #-17 would change the Task Force from a temporary entity to a permanent Commission on Human Trafficking.

**1. The sources of information, assumptions, and methodologies used.**

Sources of information: include:

- the Commission for Women (Commission);
- U.S. Department of Justice (Justice Department);
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Department of Justice;
- PolarisProject.org;
- International Labour Organization (ILO);
- DoSomething.org; and
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) USA.

According to the FBI, "human trafficking, believed to be the third largest criminal activity in the world, is a form of human slavery. Human trafficking includes forced labor, domestic servitude, and commercial sex trafficking." The Justice Department defines human trafficking as a crime under Title 18, Chapter 77, United States Criminal Code, as the act of compelling or coercing a victim person's labor, services, or commercial sex acts. According to the Justice Department, the coercion may be subtle or overt, physical or psychological.

According to UNICEFUSA, there are an estimated 21 million individuals trafficked around the world and \$32 billion in estimated profits generated globally from human trafficking. The International Labour Organization estimates that of the estimated 21 million individuals trafficked around the world, 68 percent are trapped in forced labor, 26 percent of children, and 55 percent of women and girls. ILO also reports that the forced labor and human trafficking is a \$150 billion industry worldwide. In 2015, an estimated 1 out of 5 endangered runaways report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children were likely child sex trafficking victims (source: PolarisProject.org).

Finally, the DoSomething.org reports that globally the average cost of a slave is \$90. The average age of a teen who enters the sex trade in the United States is 12 to 14 years old. Many of the teens are runaway girls. According to DoSomething.org, between 14,500 and 17,500 are trafficked into the United States every year and

**Economic Impact Statement**  
**Bill #-17, Concerning: Committee on Human Trafficking**

California "harbors three of the FBI's thirteen highest child sex trafficking areas in the nation."

In 2016, the Montgomery County Police Department investigated 29 cases of human trafficking in the County and three involved minors. However, these numbers only apply to those cases that are reported and investigated by the police. According to the information provided by the Commission, traffickers use violence, threats, deception and other manipulative tactics to force or coerce women and men to engage in acts against their will.

According to data provided by the National Human Trafficking Hotline regarding trafficking in the State of Maryland, nearly 540 cases in 2016 were reported to the national hotline. Of those 540 cases, 116 were female victims and six were male victims, 71 victims were adults and 57 victims were minors. According to a map provided in the report, most of the reported trafficking in the state occurred along the Baltimore-Washington corridor.

In preparation for the economic impact statement, the Department of Finance did not develop measurable or quantitative assumptions or methodologies. Given the topic of human trafficking, there is no quantitative analysis or data of the economic impact in the County. The only economic assumptions are qualitative. For example, Finance assumes that the victims of human trafficking have very modest incomes to meet a certain standard of living and must resort to other sources of income and employment that may result in becoming a victim of human trafficking. Finally, there are no data on the amount of income received by the victims of human trafficking and the amount of income for traffickers. Without detailed data on the incomes of the victims and traffickers, Finance cannot quantify the economic impacts with any specificity of human trafficking, particularly incomes related to the underground economy related to illegal activities.

**2. A description of any variable that could affect the economic impact estimates.**

The variables that could affect the economic impact are the total number of victims and traffickers and the amount of income, if any, they receive from human trafficking. However, as stated in paragraph #1, data on the total number and amount of income are not available.

**3. The Bill's positive or negative effect, if any on employment, spending, savings, investment, incomes, and property values in the County.**

Without specific economic data on the number of victims and traffickers and the amount of income derived from human trafficking, it is difficult to quantify the impact of human trafficking on the County's economy. Without economic data to determine the employment status of the victims and their source of income outside human trafficking (i.e., from legitimate economic activity), Finance cannot estimate



**Economic Impact Statement**  
**Bill #-17, Concerning: Committee on Human Trafficking**

the economic loss to the County's economy through underemployment by the victims through illegitimate economic activity.

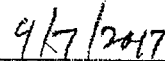
**4. If a Bill is likely to have no economic impact, why is that the case?**

Currently, there are no detailed data to measure the negative impact on the County's economy.

**5. The following contributed to or concurred with this analysis: David Platt and Robert Hagedoorn, Finance.**



Alexandre A. Espinosa, Director  
Department of Finance



Date



Isiah Leggett  
County Executive

Marc P. Hansen  
County Attorney

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jodi Finkelstein, Executive Director, Commission for Women

VIA: Edward B. Lattner, Chief, Division of Government Operations *EBL*

FROM: Kathryn Lloyd, Associate County Attorney *Kathryn Lloyd*

DATE: August 1, 2017

RE: Bill 27-17, Human Rights and Civil Liberties – Human Trafficking Prevention Committee - Established

I have read and reviewed Bill 27-17, Human Rights and Civil Liberties – Human Trafficking Prevention Committee - Established, and the bill raises no legal issues. The County currently has a Human Trafficking Task Force, but the Human Trafficking Task Force cannot advise the County Executive or the County Council because it is not a permanent committee established under County law. The task force also seeks to work with the Commission for Women to raise and spend money on human trafficking related issues.

Bill 27-17 establishes a permanent committee, the Human Trafficking Prevention Committee, which consists of 15 voting members appointed by the County Executive subject to confirmation by the County Council. The committee will have up to eight nonvoting *ex officio* members. Bill 27-17 also defines the duties and responsibilities of the Human Trafficking Prevention Committee.

cc: Bonnie Kirkland, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer  
Marc P. Hansen, County Attorney  
Robert H. Drummer, Senior Legislative Attorney

14

**TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE ISIAH LEGGETT  
ON BILL 27-17, HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES - HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING PREVENTION COMMITTEE – ESTABLISHED**

My name is Jodi Finkelstein, and I serve as the Executive Director of both the Montgomery County Commission for Women and the County's Human Trafficking Task Force. I am pleased to be testifying today on behalf of County Executive Isiah Leggett in support of Bill 27-17.

The Task Force was created in 2014 to increase understanding of the issue of human trafficking in Montgomery County and to develop interagency coordination of strategies for response and prevention. The Task Force has suggested that it become a permanent entity that would function under the auspices of the Montgomery County Commission for Women.

Despite what many people assume, human trafficking is a significant problem in Montgomery County. Many traffickers find Montgomery County to be an especially attractive environment due to its central location and proximity to affluence and disposable income. A permanent entity will ensure that the County remains committed to the human trafficking issue on a long-term basis. This bill is a simple one that will have a long term and positive impact.

Thank you for your continued support of this issue and this bill.

15  
My name is Elissa Balsley, and I am the Co-President of the Montgomery County chapter of the National Organization for Women. I am here, today, to add my voice to the support for creating a permanent Human Trafficking task force. MCNOW has been a part of the task force, since its inception, with Jeannette Feldner serving as our representative. One of NOW's core issues, is ending violence against women. While human trafficking affects many different groups, Polaris' statistics from 2016 show that, in the United States, sex trafficking is the most reported type of trafficking, and that women and girls are 6 times more likely to be the victims in the reported incidents. The ever-changing nature of human trafficking, makes it vital that there be a permanent task force installed, to best protect the women and girls, and other victims, in Montgomery County. As always, MCNOW will be here to offer any support it can, as the task force moves forward.

16

Good afternoon. My name is Nicole Drew and I am a Commissioner with the Montgomery County Commission for Women. We are an advisory board to the County Executive, the County Council, the public, and agencies of the county, state and federal governments on issues concerning women in Montgomery County. On behalf of the Commission, I urge you to pass Bill No. 27-17.

Since 2014, after recognizing the serious need to respond to the prevalence of human trafficking in the County, County Executive Leggett established the Human Trafficking Task Force. Since that time, the Commission for Women has worked diligently with its partners on this task force – a group of hardworking advocates (both government and non-government entities) committed to combatting the issue of human trafficking in Montgomery County. The task force provided a diverse group of partners that understand the impact and implementation of laws intended to protect victims, as well as laws intended to deter this type of criminal activity. The proposed bill continues to bring together partners that can provide an ongoing, holistic approach to addressing this issue – from victims' issues to prevention to enforcement.

Human trafficking has been one of the Commission for Women's top priorities because it affects large numbers of vulnerable women and children. Maryland has been deemed a "hot spot" for this type of criminal activity because of its close proximity to highways and airports. Therefore, the task cannot stop at a task force; there needs to be continued efforts towards reduction and prevention of this issue in our County. This bill will allow the

Human Trafficking Prevention Committee to lead a long-term focus for the County in order to properly address the issue.

This bill also will give the Prevention Committee the authority needed to officially advise the County Executive and the County Council to make informed decisions towards prevention. Additionally, with the Prevention Committee under the auspices of the Commission for Women, it not only furthers our mission but also effectively and efficiently utilizes the County's resources. For instance, the Commission for Women's Executive Director and its Commissioners are already currently supporting the various prevention efforts of human trafficking through the Task Force.

Therefore, councilmembers, I respectfully urge you to support this bill and allow the Commission for Women to continue its efforts towards the education, outreach and prevention of human trafficking, and to the needs of women and children in the County. Unfortunately, by its very nature, a task force is temporary. This is a great time to commit to a long-term solution to prevent human trafficking by supporting this bill that makes this a permanent committee under the Commission for Women.

Thank you.

Good afternoon Council members. My name is Andrea Powell and I am the founder and Executive Director of FAIR Girls, a direct services agency providing emergency and long-term care to human trafficking survivors in the greater metro D.C. area, including Montgomery County. FAIR Girls is an active member of the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force, Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, and the D.C. Human Trafficking Task Force, as well as, a founding member of the Prince George's County Task Force. Since 2010, FAIR Girls' staff has co-chaired the training committee of the D.C. Anti Trafficking Task Force and currently serves as the co-chair of the policy working group. I am here today in support of Bill 27-17.

Over the last decade, FAIR Girls has served more than 1,000 young women and girls who have survived human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. In 2014, FAIR Girls opened the Vida Home, a 90-day safe home for young women survivors of trafficking aged 18 to 26. It is currently the only home of its type in Washington, D.C. serving this population of survivors. Our Vida Home provides safe shelter and life skills to 50 girls a year ages 18 to 24. Approximately 50% of the young women we currently serve are from or were trafficked into Maryland. Approximately 90% of the girls we serve in the DMV area are girls of color, 70% have or were in the child welfare system, and 80% experienced homelessness prior to being trafficked. Our clients are 10% immigrants and 20% identify as LGBTQ. They are wrapped up in the child welfare system and have experienced domestic violence (74%) and child abuse (90%) at alarming rates. They suffer debilitating bouts of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and suicidal thoughts at exponential rates. Our work focuses on building deep relationships with trafficking survivors so that they can go from crisis to thriving by accessing both their individual strengths and talents and desperately needed resources.

It is our experience at FAIR Girls that an active and informed anti-human trafficking task force is critical in the fight the tide of this modern day slavery that plagues our communities. Effective task forces, such as the current Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force, focus on four critical areas in an concerted effort to both better serve individual survivors and systemically combat the crime of human trafficking. First, training committees, such as the one I co-chair for the D.C. Anti-Trafficking Task Force, develop and deliver trainings within the community, in particular to frontline responders, such as law enforcement and medical professionals. At FAIR Girls, approximately 80% of the young women referred to our safe home were identified by law enforcement. Thus, without coordinated advocate and survivor-informed training, far fewer victims would be identified. Second, once victims are identified, it is critical that they receive coordinated, multi-disciplinary services to ensure their needs are addressed, they remain safe, and they can begin to rebuild their lives after trafficking. Through our engagement in the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force, FAIR Girls

works closely and collaboratively with other Maryland direct services providers, such as SAFE Center and Ayuda. These relationships and coordination built through the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force better ensure that a survivor is referred to the most appropriate resources and services. Third, the collective knowledge and experience of members of an anti-trafficking task force are critical to the development of survivor-informed policies and legislation. Policies and laws that are grounded in the lived experiences of trafficking survivors, experiences shared among members of an engaged and well-rounded task force, will have a better chance of truly shifting the landscape of the community's response to the needs of survivors. Finally, anti-trafficking task forces, such as the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force, are vital to raising public awareness of human trafficking in the jurisdiction where they operate. This comes in the form of advising and interacting with our public and government officials, prevention education classes in our schools, poster campaigns in our hotels, and other critical public outreach efforts.

I would like to close by sharing the story of one young woman who is a survivor of human trafficking whose exploitation took place right here in Montgomery County. In 2014, an 18 year old homeless girl was trafficked from her home state by a seasoned pimp. Her exploitation spanned four states before she was found by law enforcement in Montgomery County, identified as a victim not a criminal, and was referred to FAIR Girls for safe housing. Within 12 hours, she was safely housed in our Vida Home, receiving support and legal protection. Today, she is a thriving college student, gainfully employed, and looking forward to a life free of exploitation and trafficking. Her road to recovery will be a lifelong journey, but that recovery may never have begun but for the coordinated effort of various members of the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force.





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## County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland

Testimony before the County Council for Public Hearing in Support of Bill 27-17  
Human Rights and Civil Liberties - Human Trafficking Prevention Committee-Established

September 19, 2017

Heidi Alvarez, MA  
Director of Social Services at University of Maryland SAFE Center  
Co-chair of Human Trafficking Task Force Victim Services Committee

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today in support of Bill 27-17. My name is Heidi Alvarez and I am a co-chair of the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force Victim Services Committee. I am also the Director of Social Services at the University of Maryland SAFE Center for Human Trafficking Survivors.

The SAFE Center is the first university-based comprehensive direct services, research, and advocacy center on human trafficking. It is an initiative of the University of Maryland, College Park, and the University of Maryland, Baltimore through their strategic partnership, MPowering the State. At the SAFE Center, we provide direct bilingual services to survivors of sex and labor trafficking regardless of nationality, gender, or age. We were founded by Ambassador Susan Esserman, who is also the SAFE Center's Director, and we opened in May of 2016. Our initial focus is on Montgomery County and Prince George's County, with a longer-term focus on the state of Maryland.

Onsite and through partnerships, the SAFE Center provides intensive case management, legal immigration services, mental health therapy, economic empowerment programs, primary medical care, and food and clothing to human trafficking survivors. In the 16 months since we opened our doors, we have received 61 referrals and have served 45 victims of trafficking. Seventeen of the victims referred to us have been from Montgomery County or were trafficked in Montgomery County. They have been U.S. citizens and foreign nationals, adults and minors.

We know that the victims we are seeing are only the tip of the iceberg. Trafficking is a hidden crime because traffickers use violence, threats, and coercion to prevent their victims from seeking help. Now that the SAFE Center is more fully operational, we expect to see more Montgomery County clients as we do broader outreach and deepen our involvement in this county.

The Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force is vitally important for bringing human trafficking victims out of the shadows. The task force raises awareness about human



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trafficking in the county. It also works to help close gaps in victim services by coordinating the county's service providers and law enforcement resources.

Bill 27-17 will strengthen the task force's efforts to address human trafficking in the county by making the task force a permanent committee able to officially advise the County Executive and Council, and able to work with the Commission for Women to raise needed funds for human trafficking related issues.

For all of these reasons, the SAFE Center supports the passage of Bill 27-17. Thank you again for your time and attention to this vital issue.