

Safe Harbor Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 26, 2016

Members in attendance: Secretary John Wobensmith, Secretary of State; Senator Susan Lee; Delegate Marice Morales; Doug Mohler, Department of Juvenile Services; Melanie Shapiro, Office of the Public Defender; Patricia Arriza, Governor's Office of Children; Thomas Stack, Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention; Meghan McCarthy, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children; Amanda Rodriguez, TurnAround Inc; Cpl. Chris Heid, Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force; Christine Raino, Shared Hope International; and Tina Frundt, Survivor of Human Trafficking; Brandon Johnson, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (for Christi Megna)

Other guests in attendance: Teresa Saavedra; Beth Doory; Renee Battle-Brooks; Karyne Messine; Vassi Griffis; Tristan Fernandez; and Jennifer Gray.

I. Welcome

Secretary Wobensmith called the meeting to order at 1:11 PM. He welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the 2016 Safe Harbor Workgroup and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. This Workgroup has a great foundation to build upon from the previous recommendations submitted to the Maryland General Assembly.

II. Short Introductions

Every member had the opportunity to introduce themselves to the attendees.

III. Public Forum

Vassanthi Griffis, New Hope Treatment Centers

New Hope Treatment is located in South Carolina, but provides Medicaid in Maryland. It is a 150 bed facility and is used as a resource to Maryland children who want to leave the area that they were trafficked in. This allows for the children to be treated for the trauma therapy first, and then think about the next steps of returning to Maryland.

Renee Battle-Brook, Prince George's State's Attorney's Office

The Department of Social Services needs the same protocols throughout. A huge benefit to the victim would be to get them into counseling first and have certified counselors available. Another need is secured housing for individuals ages 17 through 21. The state should adopt laws that strengthen the consumers of human trafficking and establish mandatory minimums like the federal law.

IV. Prince George's Human Trafficking Task Force Update

The Task Force applied for a grant in March, which is still under review. The three year grant would provide comprehensive services for human trafficking victims. The Task Force has also established a

meeting date to discuss protocol measures. The meeting is on September 15th and with the University of Maryland SAFE Center. The protocols will decide best practices for what to do with the victims when contact is initially made.

V. Recommendations Discussion

The Workgroup continued to review the legislation that was introduced in the 2016 session related to the Safe Harbor Workgroup.

- **HB 292, Police Training Commission- Training Requirements for Human Trafficking**
 - A Bill by Delegate Robinson was introduced this past session with little success. The bill was opposed by the Chiefs and Sheriffs association. The bill did not have any Safe Harbor members testify for it and it received an un-favorable report from Committee.
- **HB 811, Child Victims of Human Trafficking (Immunity)**
 - Delegate Morales sponsored this Bill that was withdrawn due to unfavorable report from Judiciary
- **SB 863 / HB 786, Workgroup to Study Safe Harbor Sunset Extension**
 - Bills sponsored by Senator Lee and Delegate Morales that was passed and signed in to law by Governor Hogan
- **SB 864 / HB 1490, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force- Establishment (Alicia's Law)**
 - Bills sponsored by Senator Lee and Delegate Lierman, Alicia's Law was passed and signed by the Governor - Establishing the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Fund to provide grants to local law enforcement agencies for salaries, training, and equipment to be used for the investigation and prosecution of Internet crimes against children, to support a specified task force and for grants to specified child advocacy centers; requiring the Governor, beginning in fiscal year 2018 and annually thereafter, to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of not less than \$2,000,000 to the Fund.
- **SB 865 / HB 1089, Solicitation for Prostitution – Fine**
 - Senator Lee and Delegate Morales introduced legislation this past session. The Bill did not make it out of committee in the House or Senate.
- **SB 1084, Adult Entertainment Establishments – National Human Trafficking Recourse Center Hotline Information – Sign Posting Requirements**
 - Senator Lee introduced legislation this past session. The Bill did not make it out of committee in the Senate.

The Workgroup also continued the discussion on recommendations to include in this year's report to be submitted to the Maryland General Assembly.

- **Provide immunity for youth age 17 and under who are charged with prostitution or prostitution related charges with immediate referral to services.**
- **Establish statewide protocols for dealing with missing or runaway children.**

- **The Department of Juvenile Services should expand the use of its risk assessment tool to all community and detention locations within the State, provided services are available to support identified victims.**
- **Require human trafficking awareness training for all entry level law enforcement, followed up by mandated in-service training.**
- **Identify and apply for appropriate federal funding streams to support funding priorities.**

VI. Conclusion

Secretary Wobensmith recommended and the members agreed that for the next meeting it would be helpful to hear from prosecutors and law enforcement about what can be done to improve the everyday efforts on the street.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.