

United States Senate

COMMITTEES

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BUDGET

ENVIRONMENT AND
PUBLIC WORKS

January 28, 2020

Mr. Gary Miller
Acting Director, Office for Victims of Crime
U.S. Department of Justice
810 7th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001-3718

Dear Mr. Miller:

I am pleased to support the application of the University of Maryland Support, Advocacy, Freedom, and Empowerment (SAFE) Center for Human Trafficking Survivors for funding through the Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Human Trafficking Program (OVC-2020-17755). With this funding, the SAFE Center will help fill a critical gap in housing services for survivors of sex and labor trafficking in Maryland, particularly in the counties that border the District of Columbia.

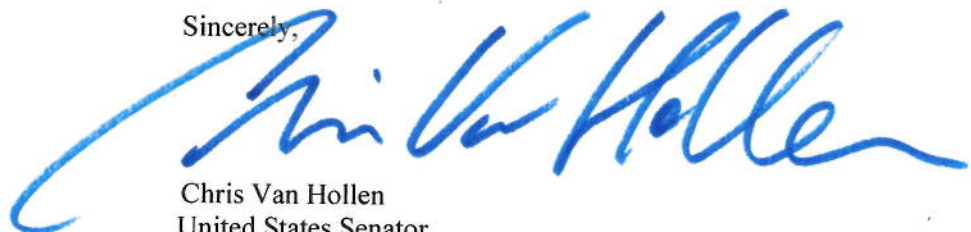
The SAFE Center is the first university-based comprehensive direct services, research, and advocacy center on human trafficking. Its mission is to provide survivor-centered and trauma-informed services that empower human trafficking survivors – including children and youth – to heal and reclaim their lives, and to help prevent trafficking and better serve survivors through research and advocacy.

Since its opening in May 2016, the SAFE Center has served more than 150 victims of human trafficking in Maryland and the metropolitan Washington, DC area and has established itself as a leading service provider and anti-trafficking advocate. Onsite and through its University of Maryland partners, the SAFE Center provides bilingual (Spanish/English) social services, legal services, mental health therapy, crisis intervention, primary medical care, and economic empowerment services to trafficking victims.

The SAFE Center has a particularly strong presence in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, where it has focused its anti-trafficking efforts. The SAFE Center helps to convene anti-trafficking advocates and multidisciplinary partners through its co-chairmanship of the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee. The SAFE Center also holds leadership roles on the Prince George's County and State of Maryland human trafficking task forces.

I am proud of the SAFE Center's efforts to fight human trafficking throughout our region. I strongly support the SAFE Center's application for funding and urge you to give it favorable consideration.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

CVH/bk

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