The Honorable . . . . . .

Delegate to Virginia’s [INSERT DISTRICT #] District

[ADDRESS] [DATE]

[City], Virginia [ZIP]

[PHONE]

[EMAIL ADDRESS IF SENDING VIA EMAIL]

In RE: House Bill No. 1033 Expungement of Convictions, etc. of Human Trafficking Victims

Dear [MR/MRS/MS] [LAST NAME OF DELEGATE],

I write to you today as [{insert connection if any to the delegate such as a constituent or a former constituent}OR{a voter}OR{a Virginian clubwoman}OR (a Virginia club) to implore you to support House Bill No. 1033 regarding the expungement of convictions and police and court records of human trafficking victims, also known as a vacatur law.

Typically, first contact a person being trafficked has with law enforcement is as an offender, rather than as a victim. Criminal convictions generally can affect a person’s employment/housing/financial aid/educational prospects, access to government benefits, and/or the ability to retain custody rights. Add those to the pain and indignity of being trafficked. The result is ongoing, compounded trauma for individuals who need the protection of their legislature the most.

The bill is not a carte blanche to allow anyone the benefit of an expungement. Trafficking victims will have to petition a court with supporting documentation and give their local Commonwealth’s Attorney the opportunity to object. This process is similar to a felon petitioning to have their gun rights restored. Essentially, the bill requires victims to subject themselves to the further scrutiny of the court system that previously failed them.

**Virginia is one of only 6 states that does not have a vacatur law. This must change.**

Malala Yousafzai said “I don't want to be thought of as the 'girl who was shot by the Taliban' but the 'girl who fought for education’.” House Bill No. 1033 will allow survivors to access a more stable existence, and not have to relive their suffering when applying for everyday services.

Thank you for your consideration and support of House Bill No. 1033. I look forward to hearing from you, and I wish you health and safety in the coming months. Kind regards,

[INSERT YOUR NAME]

[INSERT YOUR ADDRESS OR EMAIL]