

Maryland Ranked #1 in the Nation in Shared Hope International's 2025 'Just Like Me' Report Card

Maryland Setting the Standard for Survivor Protections

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Maryland Ranked #1 in the Nation in Shared Hope International's 2025 "Just Like Me" Report Card, Setting the Standard for Survivor Protections

Shared Hope International (SHI), a national leader in combating child and youth sex trafficking, today announced Maryland as the top-ranked state in the nation in its [2025 Just Like Me Report Cards](#). Maryland earned a score of 97, a grade of "A", and the #1 national ranking, placing it at the top of Tier 1 among all 50 states and the District of Columbia.



The Just Like Me Report Cards, released nationally by Shared Hope on October 14th, introduce a new survivor-informed 10-point policy agenda designed to end the unjust criminalization of trafficking survivors and promote comprehensive, trauma-informed justice reform.

Maryland's Progress

Maryland's first-place ranking reflects the state's sustained commitment to survivor-centered legal reform and collaborative advocacy. In recent years, the state has passed several landmark measures, including Safe Harbor legislation in 2023 and the Second Look Act in 2021 and 2025, which provides resentencing opportunities for individuals affected by trafficking and other systemic injustices.

Maryland also maintains an active role in the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force (MDHTTF),

continuing to lead in the coordination of services and policy implementation.

[2025 Just Like Me Report Card](#) Highlights for Maryland:

- Ranked #1 nationally — 1 of only 3 states to achieve an “A”
- 1 of 3 states to receive a perfect score in Issue #4 (Survivor-Centered Supports), reflecting the state’s demonstrated commitment to ensuring the provision and accessibility of funded, community-based services and supports
- Prohibits the criminalization of child sex trafficking victims for prostitution offenses and expands non-criminalization protections to trafficking offenses and qualifying misdemeanors committed by trafficking victims

While Maryland leads the country in its Just Like Me score, Shared Hope’s analysis highlights continued opportunities to enact laws that expand the reach of these protections—ensuring consistent implementation and access to services for all survivors, particularly those facing barriers to care.

A Framework for Long-Term Reform

The Just Like Me framework replaces Shared Hope’s former 40-point grading system with a focused 10-point Legislative Agenda. This approach highlights the toughest and most transformative policy challenges—those requiring systemic change, sustained advocacy, and survivor-informed leadership.

In January 2026, Shared Hope will release a companion resource, the Just Like Me Policymaker’s Guide, offering an in-depth analysis of more than 30 additional areas of law vital to strengthening state responses to child and youth sex trafficking. This policy guide will be a critical supplement to the technical assistance Shared Hope provides to lawmakers and advocates seeking to improve their state’s legislative framework for supporting trafficked children and youth.

About Shared Hope International

Founded in Vancouver, WA, Shared Hope International is a global leader in the fight against sex trafficking. Through prevention programs, survivor restoration services, and justice advocacy, Shared Hope works to end sex trafficking and support survivors on their journey to healing and rebuilding their lives.

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