



## Testimony on HB 1222 – Favorable with Amendments

HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

March 27, 2025

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB1222 with amendment, the Maryland Values Act. The Marylanders for Food and Farm Worker Protection Coalition is an alliance of organizations advocating for policies that uphold the health, safety, and dignity of the workers who keep our food system running—many of whom are immigrants and people of color. We urge the Committee to advance a *clean* version of this bill that reflects its original intent: to end 287(g) agreements in Maryland and uphold the core values of fairness, dignity, and justice for all.

At its heart, HB1222 is about affirming who we are as a state. Maryland should not be in the business of tearing families apart or diverting state and local resources to carry out the federal government's deportation agenda. The 287(g) program undermines community safety and public trust by deputizing local law enforcement as immigration agents. This practice fuels racial profiling and wrongful detentions and creates fear in immigrant communities—fear that makes people less likely to report crimes, seek medical help, or reach out when they need support.

Food and farm workers already face enormous risks on the job—long hours, dangerous conditions, and a lack of workplace protections. Many are also members of immigrant communities who are made even more vulnerable by policies like 287(g) that conflate community protection with immigration enforcement. Ending this program is essential to protecting not only these workers, but the families and communities they are a part of.

As part of the Maryland Immigrant Justice Table, we join CASA and others in calling for the passage of a **clean bill that removes harmful amendments added in the Judiciary Committee—specifically those requiring notification and transfer to ICE**. These amendments directly contradict the purpose of HB1222 and would effectively create new forms of ICE collaboration. The legislation must remain focused on ending 287(g) agreements—nothing more, nothing less.

Local jurisdictions will still retain the discretion to engage with ICE if they choose. HB1222 does not eliminate that existing authority. Rather, it ensures that Maryland is no longer using its own resources to support a program that undermines the very values our state claims to hold.

We urge you to stand with immigrant communities, food and farm workers, and all Marylanders who believe in justice and equality, and provide a favorable report with amendments on HB 1222