

FREDERICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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CHARLES A. JENKINS
SHERIFF

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

Date: March 27, 2025
Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Position: Opposed/ Unfavorable
From: Sheriff Charles A. Jenkins

As Sheriff for Frederick County, responsible for the safety and protection of the citizens of Frederick County, I strongly urge the committee to give **HB 1222 – Public Safety- Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)** an unfavorable recommendation.

The purpose of this legislation is to end all existing immigration enforcement agreements i.e., 287g agreements, prohibiting new agreements, and to eliminate any effective level of cooperation between law enforcement and the Department of Homeland Security / ICE with immigration enforcement. This will be extremely detrimental to the state of Maryland.

More than 70% of Marylanders agree with the current policies of this administration that illegal immigrants / non-citizens that commit crimes, that have serious criminal pasts from other countries, that are criminal gang members, that are national security threats should be identified, detained, and placed in custody of DHS/ICE for removal and deportation. This is a serious overwhelming concern of **your** constituents statewide.

This legislation specifically targets three counties in Maryland that have existing 287(g) Delegation of Authority Programs, taking away the authority of a county Sheriff which is a duly elected Maryland Constitutional office, to lawfully enter into an agreement with federal immigration authorities to better protect their communities.

287(g) is a jail-based program with limited authorities for trained officers to assist ICE with determining immigration status after a criminal arrest, and the preparation and service of detainers under the supervision of ICE. Criminals with ICE detainers are not released back into the communities and are transferred to ICE custody in the secure jail setting. The Sheriff has no part or influence in the process or the program.

The transfer of criminal detainees to ICE occurs within the confines of the jail with no risk to the detainee or the public. When ICE agents have to locate and take a criminal target into custody on the street there is always the unintentional risk to the general public, the wanted individual, and to law enforcement. This has also now become a situation of ICE probably making unplanned arrests of illegal immigrants who just happen to be in the wrong place creating collateral damage to families.


These criminals overwhelmingly prey on and victimize the immigrant communities, which proponents of this bill say they are aiming to protect. Removing criminals from immigrant communities builds real trust with law enforcement in the immigrant communities that live in fear of the criminals. The argument that the program intimidates, creates fear, and tears down trust is simply not true.

The Frederick County Sheriff's Office currently has the longest standing 287(g) program of any Sheriff's Office in the United States, recognized by ICE as a model partnership, perhaps the most effective in the eastern United States. Since 2008, we have removed 1795 criminals, many being dangerous felons. By whatever measure used, we are a safer county with less crime. It's not possible to quantify crimes that never occur.

Frederick County is a fast growing, diverse, business friendly, and a deep-rooted welcoming community, only because it's such a safe county to live in. In part because of the 287g partnership, Frederick County is one of the safest counties in the state and the entire region.

The passing of this legislation and termination of these immigration enforcement agreements will only serve to make our streets more dangerous, embolden more violent criminals, and place our families at greater risk of being a crime victim.

Thank you for considering common sense reasoning and recognizing the criminal threats we all face. Please vote for an unfavorable committee report on **HB 1222**.


Charles A. Jenkins
Sheriff of Frederick County, MD