

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,

Below you will find my favorable with amendment testimony in support of HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)

I am proud to live in a diverse Maryland community. I write to you because I believe in due process and do not want our neighbors to live in fear that a traffic stop will land them in an ICE detention center.

At its core, this bill is about upholding Maryland's values—fairness, dignity, and justice for all. The Maryland Values Act affirms that our state should not be in the business of tearing families apart, undermining public trust, or funneling state and local resources into a federal deportation agenda. Instead, Maryland should stand firm in its commitment to community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law - by ending 287(g).

The 287(g) program has a well-documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detentions. It diverts local law enforcement from their primary duty of protecting public safety, forcing them to act as immigration agents rather than community protectors. This erodes trust, particularly among immigrant communities, making people less likely to report crimes or seek help when needed. Ending 287(g) ensures Maryland's resources are used to foster public safety—not help the federal deportation agenda.

State and local funds are a scarce resource, and I do not want to see them spent doing ICE's job for it. Restaurants in my neighborhood are suffering because immigrant populations, whether documented or not, fear going out. The 287(g) is bad for the economy as well as the mental health of community members. I know naturalized U.S. citizens who have suffered from severe anxiety as the result on the ongoing assault on immigrants.

I support a clean bill that removes the amendments added to the bill in the Judiciary Committee that require notification and transfer to ICE. This legislation aims to end 287(g) agreements in Maryland, not to create or mandate new forms of collaboration with ICE. Ending 287(g) agreements does not limit existing authority local jurisdictions have to engage with ICE if they choose. I strongly support a clean bill that aligns with the original intention of the legislation - to terminate 287(g) agreements in Maryland. **Please provide a favorable report with amendments on HB1222.**