

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,

Kim Hayes, a resident of Frederick, Maryland, offers a **favorable with amendment** testimony in support of **HB 1222- Public Safety - Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act)**

I grew up in an agricultural area of the country, where I used to regularly observe farm workers bending over in the fields, from sun-up until sundown, to put produce on our tables. Because of that experience, when I think of immigrants I generally think of hard working, family people who contribute positively to society. That's why I've recently become involved with Rise in Frederick, Maryland, in activism supporting immigrant communities.

I agree with Rise's position that Maryland should stand firm in its commitment to community safety, due process, and equal treatment under the law - by ending 287(g). Despite its professed intent to only address violent criminals, the 287(g) program has a well-documented history of racial profiling, discrimination, and wrongful detentions. Recently, I learned of an individual who was detained because of a decade-old, dismissed case against him. He was fortunate; his employer went to great lengths to bring him back to his life in Maryland. Many others like him have no such luck.

I also recently learned that the detention system is extremely costly. When a large percentage of detainees are non-violent and otherwise contributing to society, then the astronomical cost of this program is even more frustrating to me—especially with “DOGE” slashing budgets for programs that actually help people. Neither efficiency nor safety seem to be the motivating factor here. In the case of the 287(g) program, it seems to me to be more about scapegoating, while the basics of what make our country awesome are slipping away.

The 287(g) program diverts local law enforcement from protecting public safety and has them acting as immigration agents rather than community protectors. This erodes trust, particularly among immigrant communities, making people less likely to seek help when needed.

I support a clean bill that removes the amendments added to the bill in the Judiciary Committee that require notification and transfer to ICE. The sole purpose of this legislation is to end 287(g) agreements in Maryland, not to create or mandate new forms of collaboration with ICE. Local jurisdictions already have the discretion to engage with ICE if they choose; ending 287(g) agreements does not limit that existing authority. **I strongly support a clean bill that aligns with the original intentions of the legislation - to simply terminate 287(g) agreements in Maryland.**

I urge the committee to provide a favorable report with amendments on HB 1222.