

From the Desk of Congressman David Trone

February 10, 2026

The Honorable Melissa Wells
Chair, Government, Labor, & Elections
Committee
142 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Kenneth Kerr
Vice Chair, Government, Labor, & Elections
Committee
142 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee,

I'm writing to you today in support of *House Bill 1017 - Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement*, and I'm doing so with a deep sense of responsibility to the communities and families affected by your decisions on this matter.

Frankly, this bill should not be necessary. But federal actions, especially the passage of the Laken Riley Act, have advanced a horrific immigration agenda without regard to human dignity and community impact. The hard truth is that Members of Congress who supported that law betrayed our most sacred values and enabled the Trump Administration's policies. A year later, Maryland is now left to grapple with the impact.

I have seen that impact up close. Weeks ago, I saw the facility purchased in Washington County with my own eyes, and I left even more concerned than before. The building was never designed to house people; yet, it was bought by the Trump administration to detain people navigating civil immigration proceedings, including women and children. Standing there, it was impossible not to think about the fear, confusion, and isolation people would experience, far from family, legal support, and community.

That is not the America I want to live in.

When I served in Congress, I worked to challenge harmful immigration enforcement practices that endangered communities and eroded trust. I partnered with the ACLU to call for the end of the 287(g) agreement in Frederick County, because it pulled local law enforcement into federal immigration enforcement in ways that created fear and civil rights concerns for immigrant families. That work was guided by a belief that public safety and human dignity are not in conflict but rather depend on each other.

House Bill 1017 reflects that same understanding. It ensures that private companies cannot inconspicuously turn buildings into immigration detention facilities without proper zoning approval

and public input. It gives communities a voice in decisions that affect their safety and the well-being of their neighbors.

This bill does not challenge federal law. It simply affirms Maryland's responsibility to govern land use thoughtfully and protect communities from being sidelined by decisions made without transparency or care.

I urge you to support *House Bill 1017 - Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement* and empower Maryland to lead with compassion, accountability, and respect for human dignity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Trone".

David Trone
Former Member of Congress