

Testimony on House Bill – Favorable

HB1018 Correctional Services - Immigration Detention Facilities - Minimum Mandatory Standards

House Judiciary Committee

February 2, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee:

I, Amy Burcham, am writing to offer favorable testimony in support of **HB1018**. To this end, I submit the following concerns:

In 2025, ICE arrested more than 3,300 people in Maryland, more than twice the number arrested in 2024. Only one-third of those arrested had any criminal convictions. Over half had no criminal charges whatsoever.

Allowing detention centers to be privately run raises significant ethical concerns over profiting from the act of detention, encouraging more and longer confinement, and cutting services (medical, food, utilities, etc.) to maximize shareholder returns. For-profit detention lacks public accountability. It is up to the people of Maryland to prevent the foreseeable results: poor conditions, abuse, neglect, overcrowding, poor healthcare, and family separation. Inadequate oversight, regardless of existing federal standards and civil rights law, is endemic to privately run detention facilities - and the results are well-known. On paper, ICE mandates certain standards, but enforcement of these standards is well-known to be weak; indeed, ICE agents have repeatedly ignored the rule of law and the civil rights guaranteed to all US residents in the Constitution, including undocumented immigrants. Allowing such an organization to scale up and outsource its operation in the face of such well-documented cruelty implicates all Maryland citizens in its perpetuation. Establishing minimum mandatory standards in our state to enforce the humane and legal care, custody, and conditions of immigrant detention centers, and providing for their enforcement, are crucial steps we can and must take.

More than one in six Maryland residents are immigrants. Many have lived here for decades, work in the community, pay taxes, and contribute to our state in multiple ways. Maryland values its residents of all backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, and Marylanders value the rule of law that protects us all.

I urge you to vote in favor of this bill.

Regards,



Amy Burcham