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District 10

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1017 - Correctional Services - Private Immigration
Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement

2/12/2026

TO: Chair Melissa Wells and Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections
Committee

FROM: Cara Chang

Chair Wells and Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee, my name is Cara Chang and I live in Reisterstown, Maryland. I am writing to urge you to support HB1017 that will be another step in banning private immigration detention facilities in Maryland.

One of the greatest strengths of our state is the diversity of its residents: more than one in six Maryland residents are immigrants, and the vast majority of the remaining five are descended from immigrants. Our communities are more vibrant because we embrace the shared experience of people from all over the world who chose to live here. Some of the hardest-working people I have the privilege to know are immigrants, and they contribute both through their tax dollars and by sharing their history, food, and culture.

Our state faces a growing problem of Federal law enforcement arresting and detaining innocent Marylanders. In 2025, Federal ICE agents arrested more than 3,300 people in Maryland, more than twice the number arrested in 2024. The majority (2/3) had no criminal convictions, and just over half had no criminal charges. At the same time, human rights abuses and civil rights violations have been extensively documented in private immigration detention facilities throughout the country. Maryland should have no part in the abuse of people arrested by Federal law enforcement and detained in private immigration detention centers. Preventing these detention centers from ever being built is one way we can keep our communities safe.

Please support HB1017 to protect Maryland residents—our friends, families, and neighbors who are immigrants—from the dangers of private immigration detention facilities in our state.