

From the household of: Mr. Mark Chalecki, Dr. Marian LaMonte, Ms. Danielle Chalecki and Ms. Olivia Lamonte residing at 3300 Governor Howard Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043, Written Testimony in favor of:

HB 1017: Correctional Services – Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement

HB 1018: Correctional Services – Immigration Detention Facilities – Minimum Mandatory Standards

1. Salient Points:

- We all have ancestors that immigrated to the USA. In previous generations, our ancestors only needed to live in the US, pay taxes and raise families responsibly abiding by our laws in order to become naturalized citizens. Until only recently were these immigrants called “illegal” and considered to not be allowed entry to the USA. There should never be a penalty to immigrate to the USA, pay taxes, and raise responsible families, unless there is judicial assurance that they have committed a serious crime.
- More than one in six Maryland residents are immigrants. Most 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.
- In 2025, ICE arrested more than 3,300 people in Maryland. Only one-third of those arrested had any criminal convictions, and just over half had no criminal charges whatsoever.

2. Specifics for HB 1017 and 1018:

- Regarding HB 1017, private detention centers create their own need to be filled with detainees (that is to say “if it is there, it will need to be filled to make it profitable”). Thus, more ICE detentions will occur only to fill that need. These centers are pits of fear and work to divide our community making people afraid to go to work, take their children to school, and shop for basic necessities.
- Regarding HB 10018, any public proposed detention facilities should have strict zoning rules. Every facility must provide common elements of living in Maryland such as heating and cooling, clean water, the equivalent of food provided for school children in Maryland, chairs, tables, beds, lighting, access to literature, children access to school, and allow for continued work for employed immigrants.

3. Final Truths:

- It is well known that the current Federal Administration, the DHS and its ICE agents have repeatedly ignored the rule of law and the civil rights guaranteed to all US residents in the Constitution, including undocumented immigrants.
- Our entire country was built by slavery and immigrants. No one should believe that today’s immigrants are any less likely to contribute to our country and any more likely to commit crimes. To believe so would show ignorance of all human history.