

Farnaz Edwards  
18680 Queen Elizabeth Dr.  
Brookeville, MD 20833  
District 14

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1018, Correctional Services - Immigration Detention  
Facilities - Minimum Mandatory Standards  
February 12, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

TO: Chair Wells and Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
FROM: Farnaz Edwards

Chair Wells and Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:  
I am writing to urge you to support HB1018.

Washington County is currently allowing ICE to convert a warehouse into an immigration detention facility. If the State of Maryland is unable to stop this process, then it is absolutely essential that we establish clear, enforceable minimum standards for any such facility operating within our borders. HB 1018 provides those critical protections. This bill:

- Establishes minimum safety and living standards.
- Ensures accountability and transparency.
- Empowers meaningful state oversight.
- Creates an enforcement mechanism.
- And protects local and state resources.

These safeguards are long overdue. The federal government has deliberately allowed conditions in immigration detention facilities to become inhumane and degrading. This is not accidental—it is a strategy meant to pressure people into self-deportation by making detention unbearable. Maryland must not be complicit in this approach. Before a detention facility is allowed to operate in our communities, we must require strong safeguards that protect human dignity, public resources, and the values of this state. HB 1018 is a responsible and necessary step to ensure that Maryland upholds its values, protects vulnerable people, and asserts appropriate state oversight. I also want to be clear that I do not believe individuals who are not violent criminals should be detained at all. The enormous amount of money being spent on immigration detention does nothing to improve public safety and diverts resources away from what Marylanders actually need. This issue is not about crime—it is about immigration policy and human rights. Please vote **Favorable on HB 1018** and allow this bill to move forward to the full House for consideration. Thank you for your time and for your service.

Respectfully submitted,  
Farnaz Edwards