

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1017 -  
Correctional Services - Private Immigration Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement**  
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
February 12, 2026

Chair Wells and Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee: my name is Judy Karasik. I have lived in Silver Spring, Maryland, for more than 25 years. I am among a group of neighbors who last year formed North Woodside Civil Resistance out of concern for the threat to our democracy posed by the actions of the Trump administration. I am writing to strongly support HB1017 limiting private immigration detention facilities in Maryland.

Yes, we need comprehensive immigration policy reform. But any reforms need to acknowledge how immigrants are, and *always have been*, central to our prosperity and the very character of who we are as a nation. The current widespread abduction and violent detention largely of innocents, based on racial profiling, only destroys families, communities, neighborhoods, the fabric of civil society, and our economy (a recent study by the conservative CATO showed that immigrants contribute far more to our economy by the taxes they pay than they receive in benefits).

People are afraid to go to work, to take their children to school, or to shop for basic necessities. Civic minded Maryland voters are stepping up in this emergency: collecting and delivering food & toiletries and escorting children to school – assistance that was never needed before.

After these men, women, and children are abducted they are taken to so-called detention camps, where conditions are so deplorable that ICE routinely and illegally denies lawmakers access for inspection. Reports have emerged of physical and sexual abuse, extreme overcrowding, inadequate and sometimes spoiled food, a hazardous lack of hygiene, and extremely limited access to medical care or counsel. Advocates for immigrants had to obtain a temporary restraining order at one facility to get the administration to provide cots, rather than leaving detained immigrants sleeping on the floor or plastic chairs. As of this writing, dozens have died under these conditions since Trump took office.

Of the more than 3,300 people picked up by ICE in our state last year, the vast majority had no criminal convictions; more than half had never been charged.

Maryland should not be an accomplice to this.

In addition, in practical terms, the creation of *any* detention centers needs to be scrutinized for its impact on local resources including electricity and water. Local residents may look to the detention centers as job-creators but their electric and water bills are likely to rise significantly and the jobs are likely to be low-wage. Even *that* does not line up.

Marylanders are publicly standing up for the values enshrined in our law and the U.S. Constitution. HB 1017 would be an important step in defense of those same basic values.

Thank you for your consideration.