



MARYLAND FEDERATION *of* Republican Women

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chairman
And Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Re: SB 901 – State & Local Gov't. Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement – MFRW- OPPOSED

The 1200 members of the Maryland Federation of Republican Women oppose SB-901. This is the most restrictive and punitive anti-immigration enforcement proposal to date. It will prohibit, not just law enforcement, but any unit of state or local government or their agent or employee from inquiring about immigration status or coordinating with federal immigration authorities in any way related to civil immigration enforcement. An individual's immigration status is material when prosecutors, magistrates, or judges are making decisions on whether to release or hold for trial a person charged with a crime, or if they are a flight risk or a danger to the community.

This bill would require state and local law enforcement and corrections personnel to notify an individual that Federal Immigration officials have made an inquiry or requested information on them and to furnish the individual with a copy of any written request within 48 hours. How much jeopardy are Federal Immigration officers likely to be subject to when their names and perhaps telephone numbers are listed on documents distributed to illegal immigrants who have been arrested, charged with a crime, incarcerated or otherwise in contact with state or local government and law enforcement officials?

State and local law enforcement & corrections officers, agents and employees will be Indemnified by state taxpayers for any costs of a judgement against them for refusing to provide information on illegals to Federal Immigration officials or conversely, they will be subject to penalties, fines and firing if they cooperate with or are perceived as cooperating with Federal immigration authorities.

While the bill provides that State and local government officials can provide information on illegal immigrants who have been convicted of a crime of violence, it doesn't allow for sharing of information on persons convicted of serious and harmful crimes including: drug smuggling, drug production or drug selling; embezzlement; theft; firearm smuggling or sales—all of which pose grave danger to citizens and immigrants alike. And member of criminal gangs – do they get a pass too?

Section 2 and 3 of the bill direct the Attorney General to draft guidelines for public schools, hospitals and courthouses to limit to the greatest extent possible immigration enforcement on their premises.

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The bill's total disrespect and disregard for the safety of Federal immigration officers and immigration law is irresponsible. SB901 is very destructive to the future of our nation as a country of laws; and to the safety of our citizens in a national emergency where cooperation and trust between levels of government is vital.

Please do not pass SB 901 or any of the anti-immigration enforcement bills before this Committee. Instead, propose positive solutions for an orderly immigration process to members of Congress and the President. It is time to end the hostile rhetoric and actions on all sides for the benefit of all – citizens and immigrants alike.

Please give SB 901 an Unfavorable Report.

Sincerely,

Ella E. Ennis
Legislative Chairman
Maryland Federation of Republican Women