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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB901

State and Local Government- Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Anita Lampel

My name is Anita Lampel. I live in District 16 and I am submitting testimony in favor of Senate Bill 901.

Jewish tradition teaches that it is our responsibility to welcome migrants. Jews have had to flee in order to save our lives and the lives of our children many times in our history, and have been seen as foreigners in the places we have called home for centuries. We understand what drives migrants to come here, and the consequences of being targeted as outsiders and feeling unsafe in our own communities.

My mother came to the United States at the age of 12 as an undocumented immigrant, in the company of her parents and six siblings. She was deported back to Canada at the age of 17, along with her parents and five of her brothers and sisters, unable to complete her senior year of high school or even say goodbye to her older brother.

How much worse that would have been for her if her father had been arrested for selling rags and junk without a license, interrogated about his citizenship because he spoke with a thick Yiddish accent, and then handed over to the equivalent of ICE to be sent away? Imagine the heartbreak, the terror of the children and his wife.

State and local police should not ask about citizenship status or do the unjust work of ICE. This often leads to questioning of individuals based on social status, skin color, and accent - clear examples of discrimination. The job of Maryland law enforcement is to keep all people in Maryland safe, a job which is hard enough without layering onto it an inquiry into citizenship. This makes the person questioned even more distressed and likely to feel unfairly targeted, which erodes the trust between these individuals and their communities and law enforcement - even discouraging people from reporting crime to the police.

My own family was separated by unjust immigration policy. We must stop participating in this cruel process.

Thank you for your attention. **I urge a favorable report on SB901.**