



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Shared Voices for Liberal Religious Values in Maryland

Testimony in Support of SB 901 - State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

**To: Senator William Smith, Jr. and Members of the Senate Judicial
Proceedings Committee**

**From: Tammy Spengler, co-Chair, Immigration Task Force, Unitarian
Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland**

Date: February 26, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 901. UULM-MD is a statewide advocacy network of Unitarian Universalists. We represent approximately 4,000 Unitarians across the state and advocate for bills that foster justice, health and equity in society and seek to nurture an inclusive, life affirming system of government.

The Trust Act would help promote a life-affirming government in Maryland. It would allow immigrants to feel that they can turn to their local police officers and governments if they have been a victim of a crime or need help. We have spoken to immigrants who are too afraid to call 911 if they have been robbed or had a fire in their home due to their fear of being turned over to ICE by the police. If Maryland limits our involvement with ICE, we will gain the trust of immigrant neighbors.

ICE and our national government have lost the trust of immigrants across the country due to their actions of separating families, creating a Muslim ban, denying people the right to file asylum, and providing inhumane conditions at ICE facilities. If we collaborate with ICE, we become complicit with these actions, and therefore untrustworthy.

Neurologically, trust is earned when each party is able to answer the following three questions: Do I matter to you? Are you there for me? Am I safe with you?

It is time that Maryland let our immigrant neighbors know that they do matter to us, that we will stand by them, and we will keep them safe. Please give the Trust Act a favorable report and vote in favor of SB 901.