



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-4436

Deni L. Taveras
Council Member, District 2

February 26, 2020

Hon. William C. Smith, Jr., District 20
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
Maryland Senate
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Smith and Esteemed Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I urge you to support Senate Bill 901, State and Local Government – Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement, which ensures that all Marylanders are treated equally by law enforcement, regardless of immigration status. This bill will improve safety across the state by ensuring that immigrant and otherwise vulnerable communities can engage with law enforcement with the assurance that such engagement will not be used to assist in civil immigration enforcement.

In 2019 I introduced the Community Inclusiveness Bill in Prince George's County that included similar guarantees. The Council unanimously passed the bill in November, joining Baltimore and Montgomery Counties in affirming that immigration enforcement is the work of the federal government, not local authorities. The enactment of our bill in Prince George's County, CB-062-2019, followed recent cases in which County residents were deported or faced deportation proceedings after interactions with police involving traffic-related incidents. These tragic stories highlighted the dire consequences of interacting with law enforcement when you are undocumented or are a part of a mixed-status family.

While jurisdictions such as Prince George's County have taken the initiative to pass legislation that ensures the trust and safety of all residents, Marylanders should be treated equally by law enforcement regardless of where they are in our state. Safety should not stop at the county line, and Marylanders deserve more than a patchwork of assurances from local government.

Thank you for considering these comments and I again urge you to support SB 901.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deni Taveras".

Hon. Deni Taveras
Prince George's County Council, District 2