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FAIR is a nonprofit public interest organization working to end illegal immigration and to set levels of legal immigration that are consistent with the national interest.



FEDERATION FOR AMERICAN IMMIGRATION REFORM

February 5, 2021

The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chairman
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Pinsky and other distinguished members of the Committee,

My name is Shari Rendall and I am the Director of State and Local Engagement at the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). FAIR is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of concerned individuals who believe that our immigration law must be reformed to serve our nation’s interests.

FAIR advocates for immigration policies that reduce the harmful impact of illegal immigration on national security, public safety, the economy, jobs, education, healthcare and the environment.

Founded in 1979, FAIR has three million members and supporters nationwide including approximately 12,300 in Maryland. On behalf of our members and supporters, I am writing to express FAIR’s strong opposition to Senate Bill (SB) 85. FAIR opposes the establishment of the Governor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs.

The Governor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs is tasked with establishing a “network of neighborhood-based opportunity centers” that among other things will provide immigration services to illegal aliens, assisting illegal aliens with matters relating to immigration status which includes helping DACA individuals with their applications, connecting illegal and legal aliens with employment resources, assisting local governments in the development of activities to enhance civic engagement, and creating a hotline to disseminate information and refer for services.

Creating special services and privileges for one segment of the population tells residents that certain segments of the population are more favored than others and it sows distrust in the government. Instead of directing these resources to the needs of the community as a whole, it is promoting “welfare rights” for those who are illegally in the country.

Moreover, creating a Governor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs institutes policies that direct resources to illegal aliens, shifting the cost of illegal



immigration onto Maryland taxpayers. It will also serve as a magnet for more illegal immigration resulting in higher costs of living, reduced job availability, lower wages, and higher crime rates in the State.

Additionally, it will put a strain on Maryland's capacity to help the truly needy in the state. The COVID-19 pandemic has already stretched state resources dramatically. Maryland cannot afford new offices and programs that do not directly benefit Marylanders but those who are here illegally.

This bill suggests that it is important to create trust in the immigrant community and that is accomplished through civic engagement. However, instead of creating trust, it will cause division among Maryland residents.

For the aforementioned reasons, FAIR opposes SB 85.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide my input. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me, if I may be of assistance. I may be reached by email at srendall@fairus.org or by phone at 202-328-7004.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shari Rendall". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Shari" and "Rendall" being capitalized and prominent.

Shari Rendall