



Testimony in Support of SB88(HB304) - State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

To: Senator Will Smith, Chair, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Tammy J. Spengler, Howard County Coalition for Immigrant Justice

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The Howard County Coalition for Immigrant Justice (HCCIJ) requests your support for bill SB88 ([Trust Act](#)) which limits the partnership between Maryland's local and state law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including 287g agreements and requires the Attorney General to develop guidelines for schools, hospitals and courthouses to establish policies that limit civil immigration enforcement on their premises thus making these facilities safe and accessible to all.

The Howard County Coalition for Immigrant HCCIJ includes more than 20 organizations representing about 8,000 residents of Howard County. We believe all residents of Maryland deserve respect, justice, safety, and opportunities to thrive and prosper. The TRUST ACT will help achieve these goals for all Maryland residents, including immigrants. At our nation's capital we recently witnessed what happens when federal leaders promote terrorism; people listen. For years, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), a federal agency, has enacted state sponsored terrorism through its separation of families, caging children, forced sterilizations, mass detention policies, failing to comply with international and national laws, arrests made in unmarked vehicles with unmarked police officers, etc. These actions have terrorized our immigrant communities and have sent a message to right-wing extremists that xenophobia and hate crime are acceptable and lauded behaviors. Unlike our government officials who were able to call law enforcement for help, immigrants are terrified to call local police if they are targets of hate crime or any crime. They are afraid that local law enforcement will turn them over to ICE.

SB88 will prevent law enforcement agents from inquiring about immigration status, detaining immigrants on behalf of ICE and prohibiting agents from notifying ICE and transferring individuals to ICE custody. This bill will help Maryland police officers earn the trust of the immigrant community by clarifying that they are not participating in egregious behaviors on behalf of ICE. In the end, this bill will make all of our communities safer and it will ensure that our police officers are not asked to participate in an inhumane system.

The Howard County Coalition for Immigrant justice urges you to pass SB88 and create a safer, more inclusive Maryland. Thank you for all you do for justice.

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