

Jeffrey A. Harrison

Date: January 25, 2021

Position: **Support / Favorable**

Bill Number: **SB 88**

Bill Title: State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

Sponsor: Senator Smith

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Dear Committee Chair Smith, Committee Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members:

-I strongly support SB 88. This legislation **clarifies law-enforcement responsibilities and focuses state and local resources and tax money on state and local law enforcement**. The federal government enforces federal civil immigration law. Local law-enforcement agencies need to focus on enforcing Maryland criminal law, investigating local crimes, and preventing local crimes.

-SB 88 does not hinder criminal law enforcement. The legislation complies with federal laws.

-SB 88 provide clear rules for all Maryland residents regarding how law-enforcement officers will treat everyone in Maryland during traffic stops and other interactions.

-The bill's clear provisions will **decrease the legal liability** that state, county, and local law-enforcement agencies currently face when untrained officers mistakenly try to enforce federal civil immigration law.

-The legislation prohibits immigration profiling and decreases the likelihood that law-enforcement officers will threaten, harass, or coerce Maryland residents because of immigration status. The bill's provisions discourage the bad practices of those local law-enforcement officers who currently threaten and intimidate residents who are not committing any crime. These threatened residents include victims of crime, witnesses to crime, and their neighbors and family members. Less fear will lead to better cooperation between residents and police. **This legislation will make Maryland's neighborhoods safer.**

-The bill's provisions reduce the chance that local law-enforcement officers in Maryland will be involved in the grievous mistakes and abuses by federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). In the past few years, ICE and CBP have mistakenly detained several hundred United States citizens! In addition, individual detainer records in the NCIC database and other law-enforcement data sources may be incorrect because of mistaken identity and data carelessness. Also, handing individuals over to ICE and CBP leads to detention of women, men, and children in substandard and inhumane living conditions with many reported abuses, including forced hysterectomies. More than 50 people have died in ICE or CBP custody in the past four years. In addition, the USA in recent years has denied asylum to or deported hundreds of individuals who then were murdered after removal to another country. **SB 88 will reduce the number of incidents in which Maryland is a cooperating party in deaths, mistakes, and abuses from the actions and policies of the federal government, ICE, and CBP.**

For those reasons, please **support SB 88** and report it as **Favorable** from the committee.

Thank you.

Jeffrey A. Harrison

(a member of Greenbelt People Power)

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