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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB478**  
**Correctional Services – Immigration Detention – Prohibition (Dignity Not  
Detention Act)**

My name is Loretta Vitale Saks and I have been a Maryland resident since 1974. I have resided in District 22 for all that time. I am writing as a core leader of the Bend the Arc - Prince George's County Minyan, and as an ally of CASA. This testimony is in support of SB478.

The Torah repeatedly commands us to love and welcome refugees as our neighbors. For example, Exodus 22:20 states: "You shall not wrong nor oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Here in the United States, the vast majority of us were once strangers to this land. The Jewish tradition teaches that it is our responsibility to welcome these strangers and as Jews, we understand this plight deeply from our own history.

I write not only as a Jew who feels called to support immigrants in our midst by my faith, but as a child of Italian-Jews who fled to the United States to escape the Holocaust. I am sickened to know that our progressive state cooperates with ICE to hold immigrants hostage in three facilities, and that it is looking to potentially open even more detention centers for immigrants.

As the child of immigrants who always felt so fortunate to have survived the Holocaust and to have become American citizens, I fully support others who have not been as fortunate as my family. This country has room for all who are fleeing violence and terror in their home countries. They should be able to emigrate here without new fear of being terrorized by our country, of being ripped away from their families and of being held indefinitely in detention. For this reason, I support the Dignity Not Detention Act, which abolishes all contracts between our state of Maryland and ICE, and prevents the building of new centers in our state to be used for immigrant detention.

Please, stand up and support this important legislation to protect immigrants who are only doing all they can to secure a better life for themselves, their children, and their families and put an end to Maryland's cooperation with ICE. I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB478.

Loretta Vitale Saks