



SB 088/HB 304 – SUPPORT

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State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee/House Judiciary Committee

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Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

Maryland Against ICE Detention (MDAID) strongly supports SB88/HB 304, the State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement Act (the Maryland Trust Act), and urge this committee to report favorably on this legislation.

MDAID is a statewide coalition of organizations and individuals striving to stop immigration detention as well as systems that contribute to detention and deportation. We are made up of over 60 organizations and over 200,000 individual members and members of those organizations.

The Trust Act will end police partnership with ICE. The Trust Act will prevent ICE from entering sensitive locations like schools and hospitals.

The Trust Act will prohibit corrections officers from detaining people beyond their release date, unless presented with a valid judicial warrant, and also prohibit police from inquiring about immigration status during stops.

We know all too well the importance of patients coming into hospitals and clinics for care, both when they are sick and for preventive care to keep them from getting sick. It is critical that ICE not be able to enter these places.

During this crisis of Covid 19, there is nothing more important than getting timely medical care. This includes getting covid tested so that someone can quarantine and not infect others. This also means getting hospital care soon enough so that one does not die from Covid pneumonia. Delaying this care due to fear of being picked up by an ICE agent will mean the difference between life and death for the covid infected patient as well as his household and co workers. Now that there is a covid vaccine, it is critical that undocumented immigrants feel safe in medical settings so that they can be vaccinated.

If immigrants fear that by seeking care they could risk detention and deportation due to ICE agents entering their hospitals and clinics, they will choose the safer path of foregoing their medical care and staying home but then ultimately getting sicker and dying from conditions that could have been prevented or treated.

The Trust Act ends police partnership with ICE. This means that crime victims will no longer fear and face deportation if they report crimes to the police. Communities with acts like the Trust Act find that their crime rates decrease since they know that by reporting crimes to the police they do not risk detention and deportation.

Passing the Trust Act will make our communities safer and healthier.

MDAID urges a favorable report on SB 088/HB 304.