



January 24, 2021

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chairman, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: SUPPORT of Senate Bill 88
(State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement)**

Dear Committee Chair Smith and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

We at the Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity (BARS) are writing to you in support of SB0088, the Maryland Trust Act, to end Maryland police partnership with ICE and other federal agencies and to protect the safety of immigrant Marylanders. We believe that the Maryland General Assembly should quickly bring this legislation to a vote and to ensure that Maryland state and local government agencies create safer communities for all Maryland residents.

Formed in response to police brutality against Michael Brown and Freddie Gray in the winter of 2015, Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity (BARS) brings together Asians and Pacific Islanders of all backgrounds in Baltimore to work in solidarity with our neighbors and the communities we share: Black, Indigenous, all people of color, workers, LGBTQIA+, women, disabled folks, incarcerated people, immigrants and refugees. We represent a justice-oriented membership that includes first-generation immigrants who moved to the United States from another country, the children of immigrant parents, and those who have family members and close friends who are immigrants. We come to this issue knowing our personal experiences with xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment, knowing the history of the United States' abuse and exploitation of immigrants, and knowing the ongoing mistreatment of immigrant people today. **We must support SB 88, end Maryland law enforcement's collaboration with ICE, and protect immigrants in our schools and hospitals from harassment and coercion.**

The past few years have highlighted escalating human rights abuses undertaken in the name of



immigration enforcement in the United States. Fearmongering and prejudice have fed racist and Islamophobic harassment and abuse, including that which was perpetrated by a government that should be protecting the rights of all people equally under the law. By passing this legislation into law, Maryland will demonstrate that it will not contribute to attacking and targeting immigrants and it will not tolerate the mistreatment of any person regardless of nationality. Doing so is not just a sentimental gesture: Cities with sanctuary policies have lower crime rates and stronger economies, and local dollars will not be spent on federal enforcement. SB 88 will help ensure immigrant families will be able to become further enmeshed in our communities when they no longer have to fear sending their children to school or talking to police to prevent or stop violent crimes. It is when we isolate and segregate subsets of our communities that our communities become divided, mistrustful, and stagnant.

We urge the Maryland General Assembly to act swiftly to pass SB 88, the Maryland Trust Act. Doing so will ensure Maryland continues to be a welcoming state, and contribute to rebuilding community trust in our law enforcement and our government. Doing so will improve public safety for all Maryland residents while reducing spending. Doing so will protect our families and our neighborhoods.

BARS respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity or this position, please contact baltimoreasianresistanceinsolidarity@gmail.com.

Best regards,

Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity