

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 Spengler, LCSW-C, Columbia, MD, 21045 (Tammy424@me.com)

Date: January 23, 2021

Please support of 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. HB304 also 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.

I am a social worker and advocate for immigration reform. I believe it is damaging to our whole society when a group of people is afraid to contact the police. It creates a community that is exploited by others as they are threatened to be turned over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). ICE has been enacting terrifying policies that are inhumane and racist. Two-thirds of detainees fear violence or death if returned to their home country. Our police are seen as complicit with ICE's inhumane practices when they identify, detain and transfer immigrants for ICE.

Both our immigration and our criminal justice systems need extensive overhaul. One way to begin is by disentangling these systems of mass incarceration. In Maryland we cannot control ICE's inhumane practices, but we do not have to assist with them. By separating these systems, we will send a message to immigrants that they can trust their local police. Local law enforcement would no longer ask citizenship or national origin questions or detain or transfer immigrants for ICE. This would enable our local law enforcement agencies to build a partnership with this marginalized community.

**Please pass SB88.**

Tammy Spengler